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GULF STATES ENGAGE IN 'ARMS RACE'

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 17-23 Dec 79 p 14

[Article by Kamil Fa'im: "Gulf Amirs Study the Tribal Map"]

[Text] Perhaps among the most fragile things in the Gulf area are the boundaries separating the Gulf states. Some observers attribute this to the fact that the countries of the Islamic world are differentiated and bound together into a number of axes. Within the circle surrounding each of these axes the boundaries have never been fixed or stationary. These observers point, for example, to the Maghrib axis, the axis of the Nile Basin countries, the Syrian axis, also known as the Fertile Crescent, and the Peninsula axis, among others.

Actually, the relative stability in the Gulf area (the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait) has almost always been conditional on stability in Iran on the one hand and in the Arabian Peninsula on the other. After Britain announced its final withdrawal from areas east of the Suez in 1970, the job of protecting the oil wells fell primarily to the Iranian forces and partly to the Saudi forces. It is not without significance that the volume of Iranian arms purchases jumped remarkably, especially from 1970 to 1978. Thus, the oil companies were able to enjoy the production, marketing and sale of oil only because the military capabilities of the shah's regime filled the vacuum left by Britain's retraction of its military protection and its withdrawal from the area except for a few remaining bases, especially in the Sultanate of Oman. From 1970 to 1979, nothing appeared which pointed to the likelihood of any dramatic changes in the political equations of the Gulf area. Since the fall of the regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, however, the Gulf area has been going through such a fateful situation that it can rightly be said that this area, and none other, will become the setting for decisive battles which will shape the future for decades to come.

In brief, what has happened is this: the veil of protection which had afforded stability for the plundering operations has fallen and left the inside exposed. This development has also brought to light all the conflicts and problems, as well as, of course, the necessity of fulfilling the conditions for a new system of protection in order to increase the stability of the area.

Based on this prospect, the Sultanate of Oman was the first to propose an integrated concept for such a system, with the United States to be the main responsible party. However, the Gulf states and Iraq rejected this concept, especially since Israel had exposed its true purpose when several Israeli officials stated that Israel was ready to participate in the establishment of a new defense system in the Gulf area in which the Sadat regime would also serve as a pillar of support. This, of course, was the meaning behind the Egyptian offer to provide military protection for Bahrain which was made openly when Iranian-Bahraini relations deteriorated as a result of foolish Iranian statements about occupying Bahrain.

At any rate, the proposal of the Qabus government was rejected. However, the Gulf states have been unable to formulate an alternative concept. Foreign protection on the basis of Oman's proposal is unacceptable because it would aggravate the situation and immediately establish an alliance of regimes in the Gulf. On the other hand, fulfilling the conditions for self-defense in accordance with the wishes of most sides appears difficult, and perhaps is impossible given the make-up of the power structures in the area as well as many other problems, the most important of which is reliance on a method of using up monetary oil revenues which necessitates, fundamentally, a dependence on foreign experts (especially Arabs) in all areas, including the armed forces. To put it more clearly, it is feared that foreign military experts in the armed forces are a virtual time bomb which could explode at any time. This matter was certainly present in the minds of the Gulf leaders who attended the military review staged by Saudi Arabia in Khamis Mushayt earlier this year as well as those who attended the al-Ta'if meeting shortly before the recent summit conference in Tunis.

Nevertheless, this has not kept the Gulf states from working to reorganize their armed forces and intensify their military training programs. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the National Guard has been equipped with new weapons, and guardsmen are now undergoing an intensified training program. The rest of the states have done the same thing, but linking these forces through a single defense policy has remained an open and insoluble question.

Based on these considerations, there has been a renewal of contacts, meetings and appeals--especially in the wake of the incident at the Grand Mosque and other incidents which have occurred in Saudi Arabia--aimed at convening a Gulf summit, or at least a meeting of foreign and defense ministers, to discuss the appropriate means to provide the conditions for a self-defense system far removed from direct military alliances. This matter became more urgent after the initial information about the Grand Mosque incident was published. This information revealed that political appeals like the al-Salafiyah Movement which was led by Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Qahtani are widely dispersed throughout several Gulf countries across strong and deep-rooted religious and tribal lines.

In the mini-summit held in Riyadh by King Khalid and the amirs of Bahrain and Kuwait one week after the seizure of the Grand Mosque, the matter of tribal and politico-religious interlinkage was discussed exhaustively. Immedi-

ately afterwards, Bahraini Foreign Minister Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifa called for a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Gulf states. The Saudi newspaper AL-JAZIRAH quoted him as saying that "the general welfare compels Gulf leaders to hold deliberations about their plans regarding security and stability."

Perhaps the demonstrations which erupted recently in Kuwait and the universal prayer ritual performed by thousands of demonstrators in front of the American Embassy, as well as the reported disturbances at the Kuwaiti Defense Ministry's Infantry School, which Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn did not deny but described as an action related to a demand of a professional nature--perhaps all these events formed the background for other statements by 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn in which he said that his country "is working to establish cooperation among the states of the Gulf and the Peninsula which will achieve the interests of their peoples."

The race appears to be intense indeed between Oman's proposed defense plans, which have so far been rejected, and the solution sought by those Gulf states now exploring the possibilities of fulfilling the conditions for self-defense. The question is this: Will developments make the Omani proposal the only feasible option, or will the Gulf states be able to reach a reasonable meeting ground with the Iranian revolution?

8591
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MUFTI COMMENTS ON AYATOLLAH KHOMEYNI

Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 26 Nov 79 pp 0147-0148

Interview with Gad el-Haq Ali Gad ['Ali Jad Jad-al-Haqq], mufti from Egypt, by DER SPIEGEL, date and place not given: "Allah Loves the Righteous"]

[Text] SPIEGEL: [Your] Eminence, the world is shocked over the taking of hostages in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. In the name of Islam, innocent people are being kept in custody, threatened with death, international doctrines and human rights are being disregarded. Do these events shock you?

MUFTI: In the name of God, most merciful, most compassionate. To begin with, Moslems all over the world welcomed the Iranian revolution as the "Islamic revolution." From it, they expected a decisive strength for reflection back upon Islamic lawfulness and Koranic virtue....

SPIEGEL: ...which have fallen by the wayside.

MUFTI: From the Iranian revolution, the Moslems didn't just expect the removal of the ruler and his expulsion from the country. However, they did not expect that Shah-era leaders would be liquidated without having received due process according to the Sharia, the Islamic administration of justice.

SPIEGEL: The accused often had no opportunities to defend themselves.

MUFTI: If what is reported about massive sentencing and execution of sentences is true, then these trials are invalid according to the Islamic administration of justice. The executions then fall under the heading of the unlawful taking of a human life, which is forbidden by God. I'll pull this together in a short sentence: "Allah forbids the killing of anyone who does not deserve to die."

SPIEGEL: Khomeyni is demanding that the United States turn over to him the seriously ill shah, alive, so as to subsequently pronounce sentence upon him. Of course, we can figure out the sentence for ourselves. Can Khomeyni make such a demand?

MUFTI: Although the shah was the monarchical ruler of Iran, in the eyes of Islam, he is only a member of the Islamic community, to whom the rules for the Islamic administration of justice apply, as to anyone else. The Sharia makes no distinction between rich and poor. Therefore, if the shah brought harm to the country or its people, he can be punished according to the Sharia.

SPIEGEL: Then, do you consider Khomeyni's unreasonable demand justifiable?

MUFTI: The question is, who is demanding his condemnation and who will sentence him? As we know from Iran, there is no government, legally sanctioned or definable in terms of the Sharia. No guarantees of a fair trial are given.

SPIEGEL: But, it is not solely a question of the legality of the sentencing of the shah, but also of his extradition.

MUFTI: There is a difference between arriving, judicially, at a sentence and extradition. Sentencing can also be carried out in the absence of the accused.

SPIEGEL: Such a solution does not satisfy Khomeyni's supporters.

MUFTI: If sentencing in absentia is satisfactory, then indeed, extradition for the purpose of carrying out a sentence can be proposed.

SPIEGEL: Disregarding the political blackmail which Khomeyni is attempting, extradition of the shah would still immediately result in certain death for him. Would that be compatible with the Islamic concept of tolerance?

MUFTI: Islam is a religion of tolerance and compassion. Islam defers the condemnation of a sick person until the time of that person's recovery.

SPIEGEL: The cancer-stricken shah won't recover again. Is Islam still tolerant in such a case?

MUFTI: The life of our prophet--my God have mercy upon him--is rife with examples of the magnanimity of Islam, which extends even to the execution of a sentence. A sick man committed fornication with a Moslem's slave girl, confessed his offence and asked for sentencing. After hearing [the testimony of] a witness, the prophet decreed that the culprit be punished with a hundred lashes, the sentence [prescribed] for unmarried men who commit fornication. After that, the friends of the prophet said: "He'll die from it." Whereupon, the prophet ordered that the culprit only be whipped with palm fronds (the fine branches of the palm fruit stems upon which the dates hang). From this example, we recognize the compassion of Islam in the determination of a sentence and its execution.

SPIEGEL: Khomeyni ordered fanatical students to take American Embassy personnel hostage, in order to force the extradition of his personal enemy, the shah. Hundreds of Islamic mullahs support this demand.

MUFTI: Islamic principles demand the honoring of contracts and the protection of guests, until they leave Islamic soil. Now, if Americans or other foreigners find themselves in an Islamic state, which has signed contracts with them, then, according to the Sharia, the Moslem is forbidden to take these foreigners into custody, to hamper their departure from the country or to take them hostage in order to acquire by force, some other right for himself. All that is in the word of God: "Abid by contracts, for, contracts are an obligation" (Isra Sura, verse 34).

SPIEGEL: And that holds for non-Moslems as well:

MUFTI: Allah says: "With regard to those mushrikin (members of polytheistic religions) with whom you have signed contracts, who have not broken these and who are guilty of no wrongdoing against any of you, you must abide by the contract, Allah loves the righteous, (Tauba Sura, verse 4).

Moreover, the Koran wants non-Moslems to be protected until they have safely reached their destination. God says: "Should thy neighbor be a non-Moslem, treat him as a neighbor, in that way, he hears the word of God, and accompany him whither he doth strive" (Tauba Sura, verse 6).

SPIEGEL: Then, Khomeyni, the Islamic preacher, is repudiating Islam?

MUFTI: It is quite clear from the Islamic texts, that one is not permitted to break contracts and to forego the obligation to protect. If the hostages entered Iran by reason of an existing contract and with alien residence permits, they must reach their destination unhindered. So says the Holy Koran.

SPIEGEL: Khomeyni's following also turns against Moslems. Already, there has been talk of "jihad," holy war, against the Kurds, because these are not in agreement with Khomeyni.

MUFTI: Islam forbids a Moslem to wage war against another Moslem or to violate his property or members of his family. The Koran says: "If two groups of Moslems are warring against one another, effect a settlement amongst them." A Moslem's blood, all this worldly possessions and his female relatives are taboo to another Moslem, so says the prophet. That is, a Moslem may not threaten another Islamic people.

SPIEGEL: Khomeyni's catalog of sins appears rather long. May he really allow himself to be called imam? Is he a ruler of an Islamic country's destiny, appointed by God?

MUFTI: In Islam, there are no clerics but rather Islamic ulema (scribes). In the Islamic sense, the title "imam" means that someone is entrusted with religious questions. In any case, Khomeyni's title of imam is to be understood only in this sense. However, as regards his political significance for the revolution and the State, that is a matter whose legitimacy I cannot judge.

[Photo caption: "Shiite leader, Ayatollah Khomeyni: repudiation of Islam"]

[Photo Caption: "American hostages in Iran: 'Accompany thy neighbor, whither he doth strive'"]

CSO: 8120/7343

AFGHAN REBELS ASKED TO LAY DOWN ARMS

Madras THE HINDU in English 2 Jan 80 p 5

[Text] New Delhi, 1 Jan. The new Afghanistan Government has appealed to the rebels to lay down arms and return to peaceful life without fear.

In its Urdu broadcast last night Radio Afghanistan made repeated appeals to the rebels "incited by Afghanistan's internal and external "enemies" to return to the fold without fear and in freedom and to voluntarily part with the weapons supplied to them by the "enemies."

The announcements were made in between short intervals of Indian film music.

The new Revolutionary Government, the radio said, believed in democracy and freedom of the press.

Meanwhile Radio Pakistan reported quoting Tass that life in Kabul was returning to normal and that the "Afghan army was in full control of the situation."

Foreigners' Businesses to be Confiscated

Afghanistan's new regime will confiscate all business establishments owned and run by foreigners in the country, the local English-language daily MUSLIM reported in Kabul.

It quoted a broadcast by Mr Babrak Karmal, who said the action was not designed to implement socialism but to restore law and order in the country.

While ensuring religious freedom and the right to private property, Mr Karmal, according to the newspaper, said his government would provide protection to only private property acquired by "fair means."

A sovereign state could not be deprived of the right to self-defense as stated in the United Nations Charter and turning for aid to countries with which it had "appropriate international agreement," a Kabul Government statement said.

"The Government and people of Afghanistan regard the campaign against them as interference in their internal affairs, as an attempt to prevent them from advancing on the road shown by the April revolution," the statement said.

The statement referred to the Afghan Government's request for "urgent political, moral and economic aid, including military aid," from the Soviet Union on the strength of the Afghan-Soviet Treaty of December 1973.

Referring to the United States' reaction to the coup, it asked: "Where was the U.S. Administration when Hafizullah Amin summarily destroyed thousands of honest, innocent citizens of Afghanistan from among the intellectuals, the clergy and the working people. "It said if the 'enemies' of the Afghan people had received an opportunity to act freely, massive repressions, outrages upon the sacred Islamic religion and our national traditions would have continued."

The statement said President Carter "was not ashamed to take under his protection" ousted and executed Afghan leader Hafizullah Amin and describe him as a legitimate president.

New Constitution: Afghanistan's new government will introduce a constitution soon which will ensure democratic freedoms for all the people, Moscow Radio reported.

The radio quoted the Afghan Deputy Premier Soltan Ali Keshtmand as saying in an interview that the main task of the new leaders was the creation of a "broad front of all national and democratic forces."

250 Soviet Casualties: The Soviet troops moved into Afghanistan last week suffered 250 casualties in the fighting on Thursday, during the coup which killed President Amin and brought Mr Barbak Karmal into power, according to the AFP reports quoting reliable sources from Kabul.

Several members of Mr Amin's cabinet, including the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Shah Walli and Trade Minister, Mr Abdul Guddus Ghorbandi, died in the coup as did Ministers of Finance and Transport, the report said.

They were believed to have been executed after the fighting.

A Soviet general has reportedly died in the fighting according to the Afghanistan Liberation Front in Teheran.

The front, comprising several Islamic combatant groups, told a press conference that the death toll among Islamic forces in Afghanistan since Thursday stood at 400, 180 of whom died in fighting in Kabul.

Quoting regular situation reports his organization received across the Afghan frontier, a spokesman said fighting had now spread through the

whole country and the army had set up roadblocks on all highways leading to Kabul.

The Front put the Soviet presence in Afghanistan at 25,000 troops, including several hundred military counsellors.--PTI and Reuter.

CSO: 4920

NEW PRESS LAW TO GUARANTEE FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE OF PRESS

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Dec 79 p 8

[Article by Nuhal Shukri: "The New Press Law: The Press Is To Perform Its Mission Independently Without the Interference of Any Authority; Advisory Board To Have 51 Percent of Stock; Employees of the National Press Organization To Have 49 Percent; Journalist Has Right To Publish; He May Not Be Prohibited from Writing Nor May He Be Transferred to Non-Journalistic Work; Right of Press Union To Discipline Its Members in Accordance with Its Laws Not Upset"]

[Text] The press law that will soon be promulgated in its final form, after it is presented to the press organizations and to the People's Assembly for discussion, includes 46 articles which contain general provisions that regulate newspaper ownership, the right to print and to publish, the organization of newspaper management and the formation and functions of the Supreme Press Council.

The General Press Legislation Committee had reviewed nine articles of the bill. It will complete discussion of the remaining articles in its next session. The text of the bill follows:

Article 1: The press is a popular agency which performs its mission freely and independently. It expresses the will of the community; it confirms its highest values; and it defends its beliefs, its principles and what it holds sacred in accordance with the constitution and the law.

Article 2: The purpose of a free press is to pave the way for a free climate for the growth of society by means of enlightened knowledge. The press contributes to the formation of public opinion; it directs public opinion and gives expression to its inclinations. Journalists practice their profession by utilizing all the methods of the press medium in the context of society's high ideals and [under the guidelines of] protecting public freedoms, rights and duties without infringing upon the private lives of citizens.

Article 3: The independence of the press guarantees that it will perform its mission without having other authorities interfere in its affairs. No one but the law has power over the journalist's profession. Safeguarding the secrets of the profession is guaranteed.

Article 4: The press is to undertake [the role of] popular guardian to point out errors or shortcomings in planning, implementation and performance for the purpose of discerning better solutions in everything that pertains to the interests of the homeland and citizens. The journalist is not to be questioned about any criticism he makes which seeks [to achieve] these objectives.

Article 5: An opinion expressed by a journalist or the accurate information that he publishes is not to be [regarded as] the cause for infringing upon his security as a journalist. A journalist's livelihood is not to be jeopardized because of his professional work. A journalist's security must not be infringed upon because of action [undertaken] outside the publishing sphere.

The original purpose of what a journalist publishes is the achievement of the public interest. The burden of proving otherwise falls on whoever claims otherwise. In all cases a journalist may not be transferred to a non-press organization or to non-press work without his written consent.

Article 6: A journalist has the right to obtain news, information and statistics from their sources. Such information may not be concealed from him. He has the right to publish all information and statistics except those that affect military secrets and documents whose publication is prohibited by law.

Article 7: A journalist is to adhere in what he publishes to society's fundamental principles, which are stipulated in the constitution, and to the values that are mentioned in the Press Honor Code. A newspaper is prohibited from discussing what is being undertaken by investigating or court authorities in a manner that would influence public opinion. This does not violate the journalist's right to express an objective opinion. Newspapers are obliged to publish the reasons upon which sentences or decisions are made in cases about which they had published while the case had been under investigation or in court.

Article 8: Political parties, public legal persons and also private legal persons--and these may be financial companies or cooperatives--have the freedom to publish and to own newspapers. Newspapers that are published by private legal persons must assume the form of corporations. All their shares must be nominal [in value] and must be owned by Egyptians only. The company's paid capital must not be less than 250,000 pounds if the newspaper is a daily, and 100,000 pounds if it is a weekly. The entire sum must be deposited in one of the Egyptian banks. Professional unions, trade unions, public agencies, local government units, scientific organizations and athletic clubs may publish their newspapers directly or by means of establishing corporations, associations or cooperatives. There are no restrictions on the form of the corporation or on its capital. Publishing firms may own specialized, non-political periodicals and may publish them with the approval of the Supreme Press Council, provided that they assume the form of corporations or cooperatives.

Article 9: Newspapers that are printed or published assume one of the following forms:

- A. Newspapers that are published by national press organizations. The Advisory Board contributes to the ownership of these newspapers.
- B. Newspapers that are published by political parties.
- C. Newspapers that are published by private legal persons, provided that they are corporations or cooperatives.
- D. Individuals who own newspapers that are presently in existence may retain their ownership of these newspapers which may continue in their activities until said activity comes to an end with the death of their owners.
- E. Newspapers that are published by public organizations, local government units scientific organizations, professional unions, trade unions and athletic clubs.
- F. Specialized, non-political periodicals that are owned by publishing firms may be published after the approval of the Supreme Press Council.
- G. Periodical newspapers and bulletins that are published by private associations and organizations are subject to Law No 32 for 1964. A decision to regulate these publications is issued by the Supreme Press Council.

Article 10: Anyone who wants to publish a new newspaper has to notify the Supreme Press Council in writing. This notice is to include the name, surname, nationality and address of the owner of the newspaper; the name of the editor-in-chief; the name of the newspaper; the language in which it will be published; the method of publication; the address of the newspaper; and the name and address of the printing press where it will be printed. A receipt will be issued to the person submitting the notice. The Supreme Press Council must be notified in writing of any change in the data that were included in the notice at least 8 days before said change takes place. If this change takes place unexpectedly, notice must be given in no more than 8 days from the date of its occurrence. In case of a violation of the first section of this article, the owner of the newspaper is punishable by imprisonment for a period not to exceed 6 months and a fine not to exceed 200 pounds, or one of the two punishments. Besides, the newspaper is to be closed. In case the second section of this article is violated, the penalty is a fine that is not less than 200 pounds.

Article 11: Approving the publication of a newspaper is considered a personal privilege that may not be transferrable in any manner. Any action which is inconsistent with this article is considered void, and

the violator is punishable by a fine that is not less than 200 pounds and not more than 500 pounds.

Article 12: The Supreme Press Council is preparing a model charter and bylaws for a newspaper that assumes the form of a corporation, an association or a cooperative. The charter determines the objectives of the newspaper and identifies the chairman and the members of the board of directors from among the shareholders. This board of directors serves for a maximum period of six months from the date on which the articles of incorporation were completed. During that time a board of directors is elected in accordance with the method determined by the charter.

Article 13: An editorial board, or several boards if necessary, is to be created in every press organization. This board is to have a maximum number of 15 members who are editors-in-chief or who come after them in press responsibility. This board is to have two editors who would be selected annually by the general assembly.

Article 14: The editorial board draws up the general editorial policy and oversees its implementation in the context of the general policy that is set by the organization's board of directors. The editor-in-chief and his assistants have the authority to implement this policy.

Article 15: Every newspaper is to have an editor-in-chief who would be responsible for it and actually oversee all its contents. A newspaper should have a number of editors each of whom is to have actual oversight over a specific section of the newspaper. The editor-in-chief and the members of the editorial board must be working members of the press union. Editors-in-chief of scientific publications which are published by scientific organizations are exempted from these conditions which are indicated in the two previous sections. Any violation of the provisions of the first and second sections [of this article] is punishable by imprisonment for a period that is not to exceed 3 months and a fine of 500 pounds or one of the two penalties.

The court may confiscate the issues of a newspaper that is in violation of this article.

Article 16: Every issue of the newspaper must include the following data:

- A. The name of the chairman of the board of directors.
- B. The name of the editor-in-chief.
- C. The name of the printing press where the newspaper is printed.
- D. The date of the issue.

Article 17: When an issue of the newspaper or a supplement to it is being circulated, the editor-in-chief or the responsible director is to

deliver six copies of the newspaper to the Supreme Press Council and to the Public Information Agency. Every violation of the provisions of this article is punishable by a fine that is not to exceed 200 pounds. In addition, the violator is to be compelled to consign the copies.

Article 18: At the request of the person concerned the editor-in-chief must publish corrections of everything that had been printed about that person. The person concerned refers to anyone who was mentioned or referred to in the newspaper. If that person dies, his right to request a correction is conveyed to his heirs provided that the heirs or their representative practice that right one time. The heirs also have the right to correct everything that was published about their predecessor after his death. A correction must be published within three days following receipt of the correction request; it must be published on the same page on which the article that is being corrected was printed. The correction is to be printed free of charge provided that the correction is not longer than the article to which it is responding. If the correction is longer than the [original] article, the editor has the right to ask the person concerned for a fee for the additional space based on the rates paid for agreed upon advertisements.

Article 19: Refraining from printing the correction is not permissible except in the following situations:

- A. If the correction reaches the newspaper 60 days after the publication date of the article.
- B. If the newspaper had already made similar corrections in the facts and statements that were included in the article whose correction is being requested.
- C. If the correction is written in a language other than that in which the news or the article was written.
- D. If publishing the correction involves a crime punishable by law or a violation of the public order and of morals.
- E. If the response violates the ethics of the profession and digresses from the subject.

Article 20: Anyone who violates the provisions of the two previous articles is to be punished by imprisonment for a period that is not to exceed 6 months and made to pay a fine that is not less than 500 pounds or either one of these two punishments. The rights of the person concerned to ask for compensation are hereby not to be violated. The court is to compel the newspaper to print the correction as it was sent by the person concerned or in any form approved by the court. The court's sentence includes expeditious implementation. In case implementation is refused, the editor-in-chief receives the punishment stipulated in this article: Imprisonment [in this case] is mandatory.

Article 21: The general assembly of the National Press Organization is made up of 42 members. Among them are 17 members who represent social ownership and 25 members who represent workers' ownership in this organization. The advisory board is to select 10 members to represent it in the general assembly provided that the seven who are concerned with the Board of Directors join them. Every one of them is to have three votes whenever a vote is taken. Reporters, administrators and workers in the organization select eight members from their midst by direct secret balloting. Each one of them is to have two votes when a vote is taken in the General Assembly. The trade union committee in the organization selects a member of the General Assembly provided that he have one vote. Anyone who proclaims his candidacy in the elections of the organization's general assembly should have spent at least 5 years working for the same institution. Elections of the members of the assembly take place every 4 years. The Supreme Press Council draws up the rules that regulate the elections.

Article 22: The general assembly of the National Press Organization is to devote its efforts to the following:

1. Approving the estimated budget and the final statement of accounts.
2. Appointing and authorizing account supervisors.
3. Approving the organization's economic and fiscal policy; considering new projects; or liquidating existing projects. This is to be done in the annual report that is submitted by the board of directors.
4. Approving the regulations that pertain to wages or other matters that are drawn up by the board of directors, provided that the general assembly adhere to the minimum wage rules that are established by the Supreme Press Council.
5. Looking into the matters that are presented to it by the board of directors.
6. Electing six of its members to the board of directors provided that two of them be reporters, two administrators and two workers.
7. Selecting two editors for membership on the editorial board.

One third of the members of the general assembly may enter an item on the agenda for discussion when the general assembly convenes. One third of the members of the general assembly may request an emergency meeting of the general assembly. The board of directors may also request an emergency meeting of the general assembly.

Article 23: The board of directors of the National Press Organization is to be made up of 13 members. The advisory board is to nominate seven of them, provided that at least four of those be from the same press

organization. The board of directors serves for a 4-year term, and the members of the board are appointed by presidential decree. The general assembly of the press organization elects six of its members: two reporters, two administrators and two workers. A legal meeting of the board of directors must be attended by an absolute majority of its members. Decisions are reached by majority, and when there is a tie, the party of the chairman of the board is favored. A person cannot be a member of the board of directors of more than one press establishment.

Article 24: The National Press Organization is publicly owned. The advisory board represents 51 percent of its funds and its assets. The workers in this organization own the other 49 percent. Half of the net profit is earmarked for the workers of the national press organizations; the other half is earmarked for expansion and renovation projects. The Supreme Press Council issues decisions that regulate the management of the organizations, the preparations of their annual budgets and the distribution of profits.

Article 25: Every national press organization is a legal person and may take all legal actions [necessary] to achieve its objectives.

Article 26: The National Press Organization may establish corporations by itself for the purpose of pursuing its publishing, advertising, printing or distribution activities without the participation of other founders. The establishment of these corporations and the regulation of their relations with the press organizations is done in accordance with rules that are drawn up by the Supreme Press Council. The board of directors of the National Press Organization is considered tantamount to the general assembly for all the corporations which are affiliated with it.

Article 27: National press organizations may share interests with other press establishments and news agencies that pursue activities similar to their own or that may help them in achieving their goals inside the country or abroad. These organizations may participate in any form with the afore-mentioned agencies; they may purchase them; or they may turn them into subsidiaries.

Article 28: The National Press Organization is considered a public sector company, except with regard to its funds and the responsibilities of its directors and its workers which are stipulated in the criminal code. With regard to becoming involved in export or import [activity] and trade agencies, the provisions established by the law are applicable.

Article 29: The Supreme Press Council seeks to strengthen the freedom of the press and to ensure its independence in the context of preserving the basic components of society; ensuring the safety of national unity and social peace; and adhering to religious and spiritual values, to the democratic socialist system and to the gains of the Egyptian people.

Article 30: The Supreme Press Council is to be formed in the following

manner: the chairmen of the boards of directors of public press organizations; editors-in-chief who represent public newspapers, provided that every newspaper be represented by an editor-in-chief; the chairmen of party newspapers which are published in accordance with the party law, provided that if a party had more than one newspaper, it would not be represented by more than one person; the president of the Press Union; the staff of the Press Union Office; the office staff of the Press, Printing and Publishing Workers' Union, provided that they be employed in newspapers; the chairman of the board of directors of the National Distribution Company; 11 public figures who are writers and are concerned with media affairs; and two attorneys, one of whom is to be a senior member of the judiciary. The president of the republic proclaims the resolution to form the council.

Article 31: The Supreme Press Council serves a 4-year term.

Article 32: The Supreme Press Council selects the staff of its office by secret ballot. The office staff is made up of the chairman, the two deputies, the secretary general and the assistant secretary general. No other person representing one of the other authorities that are members in the council may nominate himself for membership in the office. The office staff serve a 2-year term.

Article 33: The council is to form its executive committee from among the members of the office staff: the president of the Press Union--the legal member--and four members to be elected by the council from among its members.

Article 34: The council establishes its own regulations which indicate the method of work in the council. The regulations determine the council committees and indicate the method of their formation.

Article 35: The chairman of the council presides over the council's meetings; he heads the office staff and the executive committee. He represents the council to all agencies. One of the two deputies may preside over the council meetings in his absence or if he himself cannot preside. The secretary general carries out the decisions of the council and prepares the council's agenda with the agreement of the chairman.

Article 36: The council is to meet at least once a month. It may be called to an emergency meeting by the chairman, by 10 of its members or by the board of the Press Union.

Article 37: The president of the republic may call an emergency meeting of the Supreme Press Council. In this case he presides over the meeting.

Article 38: The Supreme Press Council has the right to request data from all the official competent agencies so as to be informed about the state's general policy in all areas. The council may request the data that would enable it to pursue the duties for which it is qualified and

to make the appropriate decisions. The council may request clarifications from the government on some public questions or it may invite government representatives to clarify public policies on vital matters.

Article 39: The Supreme Press Council has the right to propose legislation and resolutions that pertain to the press. It may submit those proposals to the president of the republic or to the head of the government so that legislation can be enacted or measures can be taken to achieve the interests of the press. The council is authorized to draw up the regulations for implementing this legislation.

Article 40: The Supreme Press Council must consult with the People's Assembly regarding any proposals for legislation or any bills that affect the press before such legislation or bills are submitted to the People's Assembly. The council is invited to send a representative when the aforementioned bills come up for discussion in the People's Assembly.

Article 41: The special provinces that had been conferred by law to all political and executive agencies regarding the press are hereby conveyed to the Supreme Press Council.

Article 42: The Supreme Press Council is to assume the following special provinces along with the other special provinces stipulated in this law:

A. The council is to undertake all that will strengthen, foster and develop the Egyptian press so that it would stay in step with modern scientific progress in the areas of the press and expand the terrain of such [progress] as much as possible.

B. The council is to protect journalistic activity by asserting the journalist's right to publish and asserting that he not be denied this right. [The council] is to observe that a journalist's writing is not to be confiscated and that he is not to be transferred to a non-journalistic function inside his organization or outside it. The council is to protect the journalist's right to obtain information, and it is to ensure the flow of news and information between the authorized sources and the press. It is to look into anything that may infringe upon this right.

C. The council is to draw up the rules that regulate minimum wages for employees of press organizations and for the gradual increases of said wages. The council is not to infringe upon the right of each organization to draw up its own wages ordinance and adopt it at its general assembly.

D. The council is to establish a fund to subsidize newspapers. It is to issue the order that regulates this fund and establishes how newspapers would be subsidized. It is to determine allocations for paper and for production requirements, and it is to overcome all the material obstacles that lie in front of newspaper publishers.

E. The council is to determine the prices and the spaces allocated for

advertising so as not to infringe upon the reader's right to the editorial space in accordance with international practice.

F. The council is to determine the [sales] price of newspapers and magazines.

G. The council is to coordinate and arbitrate between newspapers in economic and administrative areas.

H. The council is to solve problems that may develop between the various representatives of capital in the general assemblies when problems are not settled during those general assembly meetings and are submitted to the Supreme Press Council.

I. The council is to indicate the method by which the people may monitor their ownership of the press and the financing of the press through the Central Accounting Agency. The council is to take action at its discretion on the violations revealed by these reports if the general assemblies take no action.

J. The council is to receive notification of the publication of new newspapers, and it is to look into the congruence of newspapers that are published by corporations, cooperative associations or publishing firms to legal conditions. The council's failure to issue a decision 40 days after receiving notice of such publication is to be construed as approval of publication. In case the council turns down a request to publish, such rejection must show due cause.

K. The council is to make sure that newspapers publish readers' responses to what was attributed to them in newspapers.

L. The council is to investigate complaints that affect the rights of journalists which are stipulated in this law and in the Press Union Law. The council is to investigate whatever may infringe upon the freedom and the independence of the press. The council is to make an appropriate decision in accordance with the constitution and the law. The council is also to investigate complaints which infringe upon the rights or the dignity of individuals.

Article 43: Without infringing upon the right of the Press Union to discipline its members in accordance with its laws, the Supreme Press Council is authorized to request disciplinary action in cases that are considered violations of or infringements upon the values mentioned in the Press Honor Code. The council may request such disciplinary action after one of its committees has investigated the incident and there is enough evidence to file a charge that a violation had been committed. In this case the prosecution takes the member to disciplinary court as stipulated in Article 82 of the Press Union Law. The member [in question] and the Supreme Council may appeal the decision that is made by this authority. They may appeal to an authority that is made up of three court of

Appeals counselors and a member representing the union. This union representative may be selected with the knowledge of the journalist himself, and of the member representing the Supreme Press Council, who should not be a member of the committee that conducted the investigation. The council's bylaws identify the committee that is authorized to carry out the investigation and all [related] measures. In all cases the Press Union may defend the journalist [in question] in front of the disciplinary authority.

Article 44: The Supreme Press Council is to submit an annual report to the advisory board. This report is to include the conditions of the press; the issues that it dealt with; any infringement upon its freedom; and the financial and the economic conditions of the press organizations. The advisory board is to take any action it deems fit on this report. It is to notify the Supreme Press Council of its comments on the report so that [the latter] can take appropriate action in this regard. The Supreme Press Council is to publish an annual statement to the public about the course of the freedom of the press in Egypt.

Article 45: The decisions that are made by the Supreme Press Council in matters that come under its jurisdiction in accordance with this law are binding administrative decisions on all press organizations, individuals and concerned agencies. These decisions may be appealed by all the methods of appeal provided for in administrative orders.

Article 46: The People's Assembly determines the annual budget of the Supreme Press Council and of the Newspaper Subsidy Fund when it approves the state general budget.

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SHORTCOMINGS OF NEW TAX SYSTEM EXPLORED

Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 17 Dec 79 pp 32-34

[Article by Majdi Mihanna and Sawsan al-Jayyaz: "Tax Census Campaigns Must Be Stopped Immediately; Tax Evasion: Is It Because of Lack of Consciousness or Loopholes in Law?"]

[Text] The intense campaigns that are being carried out throughout the republic by the Tax Administration to deter tax evaders and [to check] the large numbers of tax evaders who have been listed during these campaigns are raising numerous questions about the reasons for this phenomenon. Are the reasons due to loopholes in the tax system which is currently being applied, or are they due to a lack of consciousness on the part of the masses who were given an opportunity by the economic openness to obtain more profits, but are nevertheless not making the payments that are due to the state?

The minister of finance raised this subject more than a year ago when he touched upon the subject of abolishing the qualitative distribution system, which the Tax Department has been practicing in examining taxpayers, and going back to the geographic distribution system. Many people who work in the tax field are convinced that the geographic distribution system is feasible and suitable to the application of tax laws.

The question now is this: would a return to the geographic system solve the problem of tax evasion and ensure the continuation of the census operations without [creating] a need for intense campaigns?

The Loopholes

Ever since the Tax Administration was established in 1939, it has been practicing a geographical listing method in its dealings with taxpayers. In accordance with this system every region had a tax commission that was responsible for all the different kinds of activities in that region. This method was in use for 30 years until 1969 when Dr 'Abd-al-'Aziz Hijazi who was then the minister of the treasury thought of abolishing the previous system and practicing the qualitative distribution method.

Instead of the commission being responsible for several activities in a specific area, as is the case in the geographical listing, the commission is now pursuing one business activity throughout the governorate. There is a commission for food products; another for animal resources; a third for services, etc. There are thus 20 commissions.

The purpose of putting the qualitative distribution method into practice was to standardize the method by which taxes were assessed for one business activity. This is because the process of computing a taxpayer's taxes may differ from one tax commissioner to another. This would lead to a difference in the taxes assessed for two taxpayers engaged in a business activity of equal volume in two different regions.

It was universally believed then that the qualitative distribution method would guarantee the uniform assessment of taxes within one business activity throughout the governorate.

But this method, as more than one official in the Tax Administration has stated, has been tarnished by many shortcomings and errors. One of these is [due to] the fact that many taxpayers pursue more than one business activity. Some taxpayers are engaged in seven or eight activities, and this means that they would be audited by seven or eight commissions. Every commission would audit them separately for every activity in which they were engaged. In spite of the fact that this is a waste of the taxpayer's time and also of the Tax Administration's time, the taxpayer was able to avoid paying taxes. The large numbers of evaders that became evident in the recent tax census cases did demonstrate that. It is also difficult to apply to a taxpayer engaged in more than one business activity the process of standardizing the taxes assessed for all the activities that he pursues.

According to the qualitative distribution method that is currently in effect, the tax commission has jurisdiction over 26 police precincts throughout Cairo, for example. Representatives of the commission which has jurisdiction over groceries in all Cairo districts would go from one store in Hulwan to another in Heliopolis and still to another in Shubra. As a result, a taxpayer cannot be investigated adequately because the commission's sphere of work is so vast, it cannot keep up with the activities of every taxpayer. This is the opposite of the geographical distribution method in which the commission can exist next to every single taxpayer by dropping in on him occasionally, familiarizing itself with his new activities and listing them. A tax commission can do this because its sphere of work would be relatively limited.

The biggest evidence for the failure of the method which is currently being used in collecting taxes lies in the census operation that is taking place now throughout the republic. This census is begun geographically by going through all the activities once. Afterwards the listing is converted to a qualitative listing. At the end of the census

cycle a certain number of taxpayers are collected under the food products activity; another number is collected under the services activity, and so on. This constitutes a major difficulty and a burden for the Tax Administration.

A senior official in the Tax Administration told us that if this method remains in use, there will be a need for comprehensive census operations such as those that are now carried out occasionally. These will not close the loopholes, which will rather remain wide open.

The Loopholes in the Law

Our discussion about the ideal method for collecting taxes led to [a discussion] about the present tax law that came into existence after a difficult birth. The notoriety of this law exceeded that of all the other laws in spite of the fact that it was enacted to replace two laws: Law No 14 for 1939, pertaining to the taxes on commercial profits, personal property, payroll earnings and the trades; and Law No 99 for 1949, pertaining to the general income tax. But this law was not able to remedy all the loopholes in the two previous laws. While it added some new amendments by subjecting some activities to taxes, it did contain some inconsistencies, and the tax commissions themselves found it difficult to put this law into practice. This was due to the fact that when the law was a bill, it was not submitted to the state assembly, and this had resulted in the introduction of two amendments to the law since mid 1978. The law still needs other amendments. This law levied a tax on the value of real estate dispositions. In Cairo alone the value of real estate dispositions rose over 20 million pounds, and no tax was collected on them. The need to collect taxes on parties and weddings was brought up, and a request was made that this be extended to clubs and halls. Some said that levying such a tax would lead to a decline in the number of parties, and [people] would have parties in their homes to avoid taxes. Dr al-Sayyid 'Ali al-Sayyid deputy director of the National Assembly asked [the following] question. He was reacting to the claim made by those who fear that the number of parties and, accordingly, revenues may decline. "Do those people who celebrate weddings refrain from celebrating them when the fee of a male or female entertainer who entertains at weddings increases?"

Strict Secrecy

Tax census campaigns have raised questions about their usefulness in solving the problem of tax evasion. A responsible tax official told us, in spite of the extreme secrecy and care to which he was committed when he spoke to us, "The motive behind the campaigns is to achieve tax justice among individuals. It has been observed that the sums which are collected are not commensurate with the amount that should be collected. On the other hand the commission which is authorized to list all business

activities was incapable of listing all the tax evaders because of the small number of tax commissioners and the large number of taxpayers. Besides, there are many loopholes in the qualitative distribution system.

The official added, "Some people have raised the question about why we are focusing on the tax evaders in the popular districts of Shubra, Misr al-Qadimah, Hulwan, etc. But we did take into account that we begin the census plan with the outskirts of the city because most of those areas are popular districts and are densely populated. Those people lack a tax consciousness, and there are activities in those districts that are pursued in secret away from the center of the city. Tax commissioners have not been able to get to these activities. In addition, the trades are basically concentrated in those districts. However, the role that the remaining districts such as downtown, al-Zamalik, al-Ma'adi and Garden City play will be featured in the census. We expect that tax evasion cases will be numerous in import/export offices and in furnished apartments. The census operation will be completed early next January.

The census campaigns are not carried out haphazardly. These campaigns follow a plan. At the outset a study is completed to list all the streets of the area that will be covered so that not a single housing unit is left out. Then field committees, each made up of 10 to 18 commissioners headed by a supervisor, take up a specific course. There are assembly points at which the records containing the results of the census are delivered and then forwarded to the Tax Administration. It is thus that we come to another stage: this is the stage of screening these records so they can be delivered to the qualitative commissions where they can be categorized according to the profession.

The phenomenon that attracted our attention is that all the census commissioners who were taking part in these campaigns--and there were 280 of them--were young, enthusiastic, daring people who had been recently hired. Their problems in the popular districts were almost the same.

"For example, there are no maps for the districts that we are surveying. We waste our time looking for the names of some streets and alleys."

"Some taxpayers have changed their activities. This requires an effort [on our part] to get to them."

"There were occasional disturbances and fights between some taxpayers and committee members. A taxpayer even attempted to strike a tax commissioner with a cleaver. Another taxpayer declined to give the census representative the data, and he preferred to stay in his car, threatening [all the while] that he had 'connections' and contacts."

"Some census representatives were forced not to reveal their official identities when then went by the houses in the popular districts. This is because people would not give us any information when they found out that we were tax commissioners. We played each case by ear," says a young female representative. "Sometimes we would say we were census representatives only, without adding the word tax. Sometimes we pretended to be from another organization like the electricity organization, the census, birth control, or the food supply organization, etc. These tricks used to help us a great deal in getting the necessary information."

Finally we ask: how long will we continue to pursue the campaign method in deterring and going after tax evaders? It is undoubtedly better to complete quickly the study of the tax system that would do away with the vicious circle in which we find ourselves after it has been proven that the qualitative distribution system which is now in practice is a failure.

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WORKERS COMPLAIN OF EXPLOITATION

Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 17 Dec 79 pp 22-23

[Article by Amin Taha Mursi: "Labor Problem Requires Attention: A New de Lesseps in Suez Canal; a Worker Asks for His Wages and Gets Beaten Up"]

[Text] Hundreds of cranes, dredging equipment, various heavy and light equipment and mobile workshops are now scattered along the Suez Canal between Ra's al-'Ush, the Cape, al-Qantarah and Port Tawfiq. There is an army of 20,000 Egyptian workers working at 133 work sites to develop the canal in two stages. The first one of these stages is to end next June.

This work is not less important than digging the Suez Canal which began in 1856. Egypt's revenues from the canal after the development is completed are expected to amount to 1.2 billion dollars annually.

History records that the Suez Canal was dug by Egyptian workers who were part of the special Suez Canal contract between the Khedive Isma'il and the French engineer de Lesseps. They dug the canal with their blood and their sweat under circumstances that can best be described as inhuman. Their consolation lies in the fact that the canal is now controlled by its citizens. It gives them [a return], and they give it more development and improvement so it can serve the world's economy in the best manner.

But what is curious is that there should appear a new de Lesseps among the workers who are developing the Suez Canal. He is trying to turn back the clock and to acquire more illicit gains from the sweat and the efforts of the Egyptian worker.

Between the giant dredging machines and the rumble of the huge machines, I started picking up the string of events.

Wholesale Commission

Hasan Hamid is chairman of the Union Committee for dredging machine operators in Ismailia. He spoke about the magnitude of the work in which they are participating. He is filled with hope and enthusiasm; and he is filled with bitterness over man's exploitation of man. He said, "I am Hasan Hamid."

"Every Egyptian has the right to be proud of what is taking place along the Suez Canal to complete the development project in which Egyptian workers are involved along with 40 giant dredging machines. Fourteen of these dredging machines are Egyptian and are owned by the Suez Canal Authority. Even the foreign dredging machines are being operated by the experienced and the efficient Egyptian worker.

Twenty-two Egyptian firms and eight foreign firms are taking part in this construction effort. In addition, the Suez Canal Company has vast capabilities that are based on the sinews of Egyptian workers. Unfortunately, a problem has surfaced. It is the problem of 2,000 Egyptian workers who are taking part in the implementation of the project through a group of foreign companies that began work late in 1975.

These companies were after profit, just like any foreign investor would be, and the Egyptian worker's experience, his skill and also his ability to work under harsh circumstances helped them go after this profit.

It is here that the Egyptian de Lesseps comes in; he is a private office that furnishes all kinds of maritime services to foreign companies that undertake maritime work, digging work and prospecting for oil. This office has branches that are scattered in the three cities of the canal, in the cities of the Red Sea, in Cairo, Alexandria and in al-Mansurah.

The office drew up agreements with the foreign companies to furnish them with their needs, including necessary labor, in return for a commission that would be not less than 62 percent of the wages paid to these workers and 65 percent of the total costs for other services. The office was to undertake the disbursement of the workers' wages, and it was to convey the tax allotments and the insurance on their wages to the competent authorities.

But what happened was that neither the tax ratios were conveyed nor were the insurance payments for the workers made. As far as the office itself was concerned, it was asked by the tax department to pay half a million pounds in income tax, but it was able by a special method to reduce the sum to 50,000 pounds.

A Good Beating

Nasr Hamzawi, secretary general of the Union Committee adds: "I will tell you three incidents that will indicate to you the exploitation under which some of our workers are suffering because of the new de Lesseps.

"The first incident pertains to one of the Egyptian workers who was injured on the job and subsequently died. This colleague drove a bulldozer for the Japanese (Kuksu) Company. We discovered that he did not have social security insurance. But when we took action to prove the incident officially in police report No 32 of 21/4/1979, al-Qantarah East precinct, the proprietor of the office, with the assistance of some insurance officials, was forced [to report the incident]; he put down the name of the worker, who had lost his life, in the Suez insurance office on 28/4/1979, that is, 1 week after the man was wounded and killed. The proprietor of the office thought that payment of 200 pounds would be sufficient; 100 pounds came from the Japanese company for the worker's family. The worker's colleagues, however, paid 650 pounds that were officially delivered to his family.

"The second incident pertains to the forgery of work permits. The office takes advantage of the illiteracy of some workers and issues two different wage contracts. The office agrees with the worker on a daily wage of 2 pounds and establishes in the other contract, which it submits to the foreign company from which it gets the workers' wages, that the [daily] wage is 3 pounds. The office then retains the difference.

"The third incident took place on the 18th of last August when Husayn Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Aziz, a worker who was employed at the (Okashiko) Company went to the office to receive the rest [of the money that] was due to him for his period of employment before he was summoned for military duty. A good beating and torn clothes were his lot."

Nasr Hamzawi adds, "We are asking that a fact-finding committee of the Manpower Committee of the People's Assembly be formed, and we are ready to suffer the harshest of penalties if our allegations prove to be unfounded.

An Investigating Committee

I took these facts to the General Trade Union for Maritime Transport Workers. I took them to Muhammad Abu Tur, Union Chairman. He showed me various telegrams and complaints that were sent by the workers from various work sites.

Then he said, "These problems are established facts. We have also been following them since the previous session of the trade union and through meetings we have had with various Egyptian and foreign officials in the foreign companies. We were able to achieve several results, the most important of which is the fact that most of these problems were not brought about by the management of the foreign companies. This is because the work contracts were drawn up between the workers and the Egyptian labor contractor. This contractor must be made to answer for these problems because he is well aware that what he is doing is against the law. Egyptian labor laws prohibit the opening of offices to furnish men [for labor]. It was for this reason that the Minister of Manpower issued his ministerial order No 10 for 1979. This order gives the general union the authority to put the workers to work.

"The workers' contractor must be questioned about workers' rights which he usurped. He used to deduct the insurance rates from them, but he has not yet made these payments. In addition, he has also not made the tax payments on the wages.

"Because of the large number of problems that occur between the workers and the work contractor and because these problems affect the regularity of the work, some companies have begun asking the workers to take up all the problems that they have regarding their wages with the foreign management and not with the Egyptian contractor. Some of these companies have also asked that workers be hired through the general union in accordance with the law.

"I recall that among the problems that came up was what had happened on 20/5/1979 when one of the workers who works as an electrician went to the supplier's office to inquire about his insurance card and how the insurance payments which were deducted from his wages were being paid. He was given a good beating. This enraged all the workers who collected signatures and sent telegrams to the general union and to the general federation of labor. Foreign companies are urging that dealing with the contractor's office be suspended. But the contractor's defiance is such that he arbitrarily fired the staff members of the union committee in spite of the fact that such a measure is against the law. It was this that led the governor of Ismailia, Minister 'Abd-al-Mun'im 'Imarah to intervene personally to stop such illegal actions."

The statement of the president of the General Union for Maritime Transport Workers came to an end. This statement is supported by documents and papers, and they are all in our possession. They reveal a new offensive story of exploitation that reminds us of and takes us back to the days of de Lesseps as we stated in our investigative article.

8592

CSO: 4802

NEW CUSTOMS ZONES IN SINAI

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 21 Dec 79 p 8

[Article by 'Adil Ibrahim: "Eleven Customs Zones in Sinai Along the al-'Arish - Ra's Muhammad Line"]

[Text] A decision will be issued in mid January to establish eight land customs zones along the common principal roads in Sinai on Egypt's eastern borders along [the lines of the] temporary Israeli withdrawal from al'Arish to Ra's Muhammad. These roads are: the Rafah - al-'Arish Road; the al-Hafan - al-'Arish Road; al-Hasanah - al-Qasimah; Nakhl al-Qasimah - al-Kuntilla; Saint Catherine - Dhahab; Saint Catherine Nuwayba'ah; the southern Firan Road; and the Sharm alShaykh - al-Tur Road. In addition three air customs posts [will be established] at the airports of al-'Arish, al-Tur and Saint Catherine.

These posts will carry out the customs measures on passengers who are arriving and departing by land means and from civilian airports. They will execute all customs measures on imported and exported merchandise and goods. They will execute all customs measures on all passenger cars that come into and leave the Sinai customs. In addition, [they will perform similar functions] at the other airports that are designated for civilian purposes--and among them are the al-Maliz and al-Sarughadah-- and at the sea ports in al-Tur, al-'Arish and Abu Rudeis. These sea ports are used for exporting oil and natural gas, for fishing, for exporting Egyptian products and for importing foreign goods.

The forces of the coast guard and the border patrol will guard the other roads and routes to prevent the entry or exit of any merchandise or individuals by any other than the authorized routes so as to combat smuggling operations. The Ministry of Finance has requested the appointment of 50 persons with a business degree to tighten the customs loopholes in the areas of al-'Arish, al-Matar, al-Tur, al-Nina' and Saint Catherine.

9592
CSO: 4802

CONFLICT OVER SHATT-AL-'ARAB GROWS MORE SERIOUS

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 29 Dec 79 p 21

[Interview with Iraqi Minister of Communications and Information Latif Nasim Jasim al-Dulaymi, in Riyadh on 22 December 1979, by Sulayman Nimir: "The Shatt-al-'Arab Is an Iraqi River and Iran Must Give Back the Arab Islands"]

[Text] In spite of the fact that the holding of the American hostages at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran is the hottest Iranian issue these days and the problem which preoccupies public opinion circles in the Gulf area and the world, the Iraqi-Iranian dispute is no less hot than any issue which has gone before it, especially since it is an issue with roots that go back to the reign of the deposed shah of Iran.

On one occasion when a Palestinian official was discussing the Iranian-Iraqi dispute with Abul Hasan Bani-Sadr, who was then in charge of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, the Iranian Minister said to the Palestinian official: "We still do not know what Iraq wants from us. What does it want to achieve by interfering in the internal problems of Iran?"

AL-MUSTAQBAL met with Latif Nasim al-Jasim, Iraqi minister of [communications and] information, during his visit to Riyadh last Saturday to attend the meeting of Arab information ministers of the Gulf states. We put the same question to him that the Iranian official had posed, to which the Iraqi minister replied as follows:

[Answer] We in Iraq do not demand anything directly from Iran. However, the Iranians must set things right by eliminating the reasons for our dispute with them. One of these reasons is Iraq's view that Iran must give the ethnic minorities in Iran, and especially the Arab people in Arabistan, their right to autonomy. As is generally known, Iran is composed of a number of peoples and regions including Arabistan, the Baluchis, the Turkmen and the Kurds, and these peoples are still suffering from persecution, repression and deprivation. We had expected that the new regime in Iran would grant these minorities and peoples their right to exercise self-government in the regions in which they live, but unfortunately this has not happened. This is one of the reasons for our dispute with Iran.

Iraq believes that the Algeria Pact which was concluded between us and the shah's regime in 1975 is unfair to Iraq. This pact must be reconsidered because we have an unfailing belief that the Shatt-al-'Arab is an Iraqi river. Furthermore, Iran must return the three islands in the Persian Gulf--Abu Musa, Tunb al-Sughra and Tunb al-Kubra--to the UAE, because Iran seized these islands during the reign of the shah after the British withdrew from them.

Iraq believes that the current policy which Iran is pursuing serves American imperialist schemes in the area by contributing to the creation of tension in the Gulf area and thus providing sufficient justification for this imperialism to interfere in area affairs. Iraq feels that Iran must cease and desist from inventing and spreading lies and allegations against Iraq.

These are the reasons for our dispute with Iran. If Iran could eliminate the causes of this dispute, then cooperative relations would prevail in the area--not only between Iraq and Iran but between each of the area states and Iran.

[Question] What are the reasons for your demand that the Algeria Pact be reconsidered, even though Iraqi President Saddam Husayn himself signed it?

[Answer] Circumstances have changed and new givens have emerged in the area. We had hoped that the new regime in Iran would realize this.

[Question] The Iranians charge that you are interfering in the internal affairs of their country and that you are behind the disturbances which are occurring in the Arabistan region.

[Answer] It has become a customary thing with the current leadership in Iran to lay the responsibility for the internal crises plaguing Iran on what they refer to as foreign agencies, which includes Iraq. An indication of this is the storming of the American Embassy in Tehran and the continued holding of the American hostages. When the internal problems in Iran, and especially the problem of Kurdistan, got out of hand, and when the conflicts among the Iranian leaders began to grow worse and come to the surface, the holding of the hostages in the embassy was contrived to distract the Iranian people's attention away from the real crises and problems which had begun to plague them.

[Question] Does this mean that Iraq is opposed to the holding of the hostages in the American Embassy?

[Answer] We in Iraq believe that this contrived operation serves the imperialist schemes aimed at the area and creates sufficient justification for the United States to interfere in the area.

[Question] Does this mean that you expect American military interference in the area?

[Answer] No one knows yet. But the holding of the hostages would be the pretext for any interference.

[Question] There has been talk of a Palestinian mediation effort between Iraq and Iran. To what extent is this accurate?

[Answer] We do not acknowledge a policy of mediation with any state. We discuss matters directly without resorting to such methods.

[Question] What was contained in the messages which Iraqi President Saddam Husayn sent to Arab leaders within the last few days?

[Answer] These messages affirm President Saddam Husayn's continuing desire to apprise Arab leaders and officials of Arab and international conditions from time to time and of Iraq's position on any developments which arise in the area. This is based on Iraq's policy of coordination with our Arab brothers on various matters.

[Question] Is Iraq pleased with the level of application that the Baghdad Summit resolutions have reached?

[Answer] All the Arab states are still strongly committed to these resolutions, but we need additional measures in order to put these resolutions into effect completely.

[Question] How far along are the efforts to form a national assembly in Iraq and a legislative assembly in the autonomous area of the Kurds?

[Answer] The draft plans for the national assembly and the legislative assembly are still being debated at all popular and mass levels in Iraq. When this debating process is completed, the members of the national assembly of Iraq and the legislative assembly of the autonomous area will be chosen in free elections.

8591

CSO: 4802

BRIEFS

MIRAGE, CROTALE SALE--During the first half of next year, Iraq will receive French F-1 and Mirage 2,000 fighter planes, Crotale missiles, and a modern radar network. France has apparently dropped its reservations about supplying Iraq with these weapons. During the first week of this month, the French received Gen Muhammad Jasim Hanash al-Jabouri, commander of the Air Force and Iraqi Air Defense, to work out the final details concerning the delivery of the weapons. Observers believe that the number of planes in the deal has not yet been agreed on, and that General al-Jabouri's visit included an extended discussion on this matter. It is expected that a number of Iraqi military personnel will be attached to air bases in central, southern and western France for training in the operation of the French aircraft. [Text] [Riyadh AL-YAMAMA in Arabic 14 Dec 79 p 12]

8591
CSO: 4802

PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSAL LEADS TO COMPROMISE ON SETTLEMENTS

Tel Aviv HAZOFEH in Hebrew 12 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Prime Minister's Proposal Avoids Confrontation Between Weizman and Sharon"]

[Text] The expected confrontation between Defense Minister Weizman and Agriculture Minister Sharon was avoided on 11 November thanks to a compromise proposed by the prime minister. The compromise was to deal only with general principles regarding settlement in Judea and Samaria and leave the specifics of implementation to a special ministerial committee to be appointed to this end. Political wisdom won in this struggle between personalities, approaches and ideologies.

The time has come to realize that the public debates on settlement matters, as they are heard from the ministerial committees and the government meetings, are useless. The resolutions arrived at on 11 November do not detract anything from the desire of the government to carry out the court's ruling, as befits a democratic country, but they signal the ministers to conduct debates among themselves, within the government, not outside. It is regrettable that neither the government nor the press maintains the secrecy of closed door discussions of the ministerial committee for defense, thus jeopardizing both the government and the settlement issue.

The prime minister should lay the rule even on political discussions pertaining to settlements, as they actually are discussions on defense matters. The government should treat settlements on an implementation basis and limit debate on the issue. Any public discussion only jeopardizes settlement. The impression created overseas is that Israel is trying to expand into Judea and Samaria with thousands of settlers. Actually, to date, there are less than 20,000 Jewish settlers in Judea and Samaria among 1,500,000 Arab residents. The public debate on each settlement and the confrontation between ministers create a bad impression both in the world and within Israel and hurt the cause which is of interest to both sides.

The government's proposal of 11 November to relocate Elon-Moreh to a site close to Nablus, which has twice as much land as the current settlement, is both logical and fair. It is prudent to act rationally on this issue and

avoid a confrontation between settlers and soldiers against the background of implementation of the supreme court's ruling. At the same time court proceedings should be expedited in order to avoid future delays and blocks to settlements because of legal manuevers. This is a good opportunity to find a real solution to this problem and it is just as well that the government charged the legal adviser and a group of jurists to examine it carefully.

8646

CSO: 4805

SPECULATION ON NEW CHIEF OF STAFF

Tel Aviv HA'ARET in Hebrew 23 Nov 79 p 13

[Article by Ze'ev Shif: "Speculations on the Next Chief of Staff"]

[Text] There is no connection to the debate on the affair of the sentence reductions of Liderman, Pinto and Sadeh, but the date is drawing close for decisions on the successor of Lieutenant General Eytan and the preparation of the designated 12-th chief of staff of the IDF. Eytan has been in his job for one-and-a-half years. A regular term for a chief of staff is of 3 years (with the exception of four chiefs of staffs who served for longer periods). Therefore, it is in the third year that decisions are made which point to the trends in the choice.

Since the IDF has not yet recovered from the side effects of the Yom Kippur War, and since gaps have not yet been closed, decisions this time will be more complicated. This is the reason for raising the subject, and there is no indication that Defense Minister Weizman intends to replace Raful before his term is up. Moreover, it is clear to this author, that Weizman is not sorry, as some would have it, for his decision to appoint Eytan IDF chief of staff.

Preparedness for The Job

This author assumes that Weizman would not have approved every action and decision of Eytan. To be sure, he voiced his reservations on some. But on the affair of Pinto-Sadeh, an affair that caused some to call for the resignation of Eytan, the chief of staff has the full support of the defense minister. The point is that Weizman recommended to the president to further reduce the sentences of the officers who were tried with Sadeh and to even reduce the sentences of the soldiers whose cases the chief of staff refused to consider. In any event, the issue of Pinto-Sadeh has nothing to do with the fact that the time for choosing a successor for Eytan is drawing closer.

What are the choices available to the defense minister? If Weizman wanted to prepare the man who competed for the job with Eytan, Major General Herzl Shapir, he could have done so very easily recently. From the time that Shapir

was offered the job of superintendent of police to the time that he responded affirmatively, Weizman could have told him to not rush to leave the IDF. This was not done. Thus the natural candidates within the IDF are four major generals. The most senior of them is the deputy chief of staff and head of the general command, Major General Yekuti'el Adam. The others are the three regional major generals: Ben-Gal (Yanush) of the northern command, Moshe Levy of the central command and Dan Shomron of the southern command.

It is only natural that the defense minister would want to prepare at least two candidates. One way of doing it is an appointment to head the general command. This is the way to get the candidate ready and to give them the opportunity of acquiring experience. Therefore it is clear that in any event there will be some changes in the general command. In other words, even if Major General Adam is one of the candidates to succeed Eytan, he will have to vacate the position of head of the general command so that one of the junior major generals may have a chance to acquire some experience on the job.

The three regional commanders have been progressing, more or less, along the same career paths. All three were battalion commanders during the Yom Kippur War or even before. All three were "sucked up" fast because of the vacuum formed after the war, and were appointed to the high office of regional commander. Some commanders stand out as regional commanders because of their stability, others because of their courage and military leadership. But none of the three has been in a general command position as major general (Major General Levy was head of the operational command, Shomron was chief paratrooper commander whereas Ben-Gal was in the general command for a short period).

Everyone agrees that in order to be chief of staff of an advanced army in a country struggling with political and economic problems as complicated as Israel's, it is not enough to have just military experience. It is most important that the chief of staff will have served, prior to his appointment, in a senior position, such as head of the general command, where the subject is dealt on a national security level. True, Gur was appointed chief of staff without first having been through the general command, but this should not set a precedence.

An Interim Chief of Staff

It is therefore most desirable that the three major generals, or at least two of them, will first try and prove themselves as heads of the general command. At this stage it is only possible for one of them to be appointed, and for one year only, the third and last year of Eytan's term. It follows that in order to prepare two of the major generals in the general command for a reasonable time, we are missing 2 years.

This period will make it possible to bridge the gap that was formed in the IDF leadership following the Yom Kippur War. During this period the major

generals will become ready for the job, will acquire additional experience, and it is also possible that one of them will temporarily leave in order to study. Nothing will be detracted from the prestige of the candidates if the competition, which was accelerated following the Yom Kippur War, is slightly halted.

In order to bridge this gap one of the old timers of the outstanding IDF's major generals can be offered to fill the position on an interim basis, for a period of 2 years. There are not too many candidates, but there are some who could do the job very well. At first this seems to be an outside possibility, unprecedented in the IDF's history, but it should be considered carefully.

8646
CSO: 4805

BROADENING SETTLEMENTS CONTRADICTORY TO AUTONOMY TALKS

'HAMODI'A' Comment

Jerusalem HAMODI'A in Hebrew 16 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "The Decision To Broaden Settlements May Seem Contradictory to the Continued Autonomy Talks"]

[Text] Although the timing was accidental one cannot ignore the relationship between two events that happened on 15 November. While the IDF handed over the area purported to be Mt Sinai the ministerial committee on settlement resolved to intensify Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria without taking into account that this move may have an adverse effect on peace moves with Egypt in the near and not so near future.

Undoubtedly there is some connection between the decision to evacuate Elon- Moreh as per the court order, and the decision to construct 10,000-15,000 residential units in Judea and Samaria. Perhaps this was meant to compensate the settlers of Elon-Moreh and prevent a physical confrontation. The date set by the court is getting closer and poses political difficulties to the government. Earlier the government decided to relocate the settlement to Tel-Qabir. The proposal to evacuate the homes that were built on private land and leave others intact is apparently unacceptable since it can be interpreted as bypassing the court's ruling and the government would like to avoid any confrontation with the judiciary.

The decision should be regarded as demonstrative only. The idea is to demonstrate that the government is of the opinion that the western Land of Israel should not be redivided and that the autonomy to be given to the Arabs does not take the land from Israel's hands. But this does not cover up the fact that this government, like its predecessors, is stopping short of annexing Judea and Samaria. The consideration that prevents annexation needs no interpretation. Sometimes it seems that the government is feeble about the matter. It cannot give much hope to those who object to returning any lands. The defeat at the courts could perhaps have been avoided at an earlier stage. It seems that now it has missed the boat. The American administration has not yet made its peace with the annexation of east

Jerusalem. Or maybe it should be observed that it has not even recognized Israel's sovereignty over the western part of the city, except maybe de facto. There is no reason to assume that Washington will at any time soon move its embassy to west Jerusalem, at least to put an end to all doubts. Washington certainly would never recognize the annexation of Judea and Samaria.

Washington regards all Israeli settlement projects in a very bad light. Not too long ago some senior officials hinted that continued settlement in Judea and Samaria may jeopardize economic and military aid from the United States. The decision to broaden the scope of construction in the territories will probably bring about a very sharp American reaction.

There is somewhat of a contradiction in continuing the autonomy talks, which, according to participants, are progressing at a reasonable pace. President Sadat guessed recently that they would end sooner than expected. Sadat's optimism is suspect.

As was mentioned it is difficult to bridge the contrast between the withdrawal from the Sinai and the danger that Sadat will become stubborn as soon as he gets back the last peace of land in the Sinai. He may then revert to the famous "connection" that was the stumbling block to begin with. Sadat is maintaining his silence while he makes sure that Israel keeps its part of the agreement. He does not invest more than just a few pretty words. It is known that not all his colleagues agree with his tactics.

There is also the question of whether under present conditions the government has the means to build 10,000 residential units, which poses a doubtful cloud on its position in the area. It is heart breaking to see Israel evacuating areas, leaving behind property that cost a fortune to the Israeli taxpayer, and pays high compensation to those who established settlements. Does the government have the budget to supply the nation's needs within and without the green line? Or should we be worried about whether settlement in Judea and Samaria ought to be at the expense of housing units for the needy? Will the government be able to force the needy to go to new or enlarged settlements? It is very easy to give such advice, but it is doubtful that it will be accepted. Is the government aware that some of the settlers already own housing in the urban areas and the risk that they are taking is smaller than that of young couples with no roof over their heads?

The continued peace moves with Egypt and the intensification of settlement in Judea and Samaria seem contradictory. At one point this contradiction may stick out and then it may turn out that the peace treaty was a mistake. The two do not jive. Is it prudent to give Egypt an excuse to deny its obligations after it receives its share of the agreement and leaves us empty handed? Do they really believe in Sadat's good intentions to the end or should he be treated with "suspicion and respect," or at least he should not be given an excuse that may be popular with the public, especially with the American administration whose support and help we want.

'HAZOPEN' Comment

Tel Aviv HAZOPEN in Hebrew 16 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Ministerial Committee Adopts Resolution on Further Settlement in Occupied Territories"]

[Text] The settlement plan, as adopted by the ministerial committee on settlement, with all members but one concurring, deals with formulation, timing and details. It is based on the government's resolution of earlier in the week to expand settlement in Judea and Samaria, and the Jordan Valley, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. The resolution points out the broadening of the scope "with added people to existing settlements and establishing new settlements on land owned by the government."

According to this principle, the ministerial committee on settlement resolved to establish 19 settlements in Judea and Samaria, most of them in the five centers of Reikhan, Bitan, Karnei-Shomron, Gush-Ma'aleh-HaEdomin and Gush-Etzyon. The committee points out that the development plan and the budget include the construction of 10,000-12,000 residential units annually. It is also planned to have 12 NAHAL settlements.

The overall plan, which includes expansion of existing settlements and a multi year plan for the construction of housing units throughout the area, incorporates two directions in the settlement policy.

The adoption of the plan now, before the deadline of the court's ruling, will facilitate the Gush-Emunim solution. The Israeli government which is committed to a settlement policy, adopted a plan whose implementation will include, in the future, many Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria.

The test will be in implementation, as was already stated, and in finding the financial resources as well as in inter-ministerial cooperation during implementation. Now the editors can only point out with approval the mere decision to broaden existing settlements and to establish new ones. The plan has a potential of a move toward settlement in Judea and Samaria.

As to the court's ruling on Elon-Moreh, which the government is committed to carry out, a practical and legal question has come up as to the extent of the land in dispute. It has been shown that at issue are only 125 dunums, on which there are no structures, whereas most of the land, 570 dunums, were not included in the suit. It was found, in the settlers' opinion, that there is no basis for a confrontation after the claimants' lands are returned to their owners. The ruling ought to be carried out as is, without nit picking. In the opinion of the justice minister and the legal adviser the court's ruling mandates the evacuation of the whole settlement.

According to the report, the prime minister promised the Gush Emunim delegation to present the problem for evaluation, and if it merits, to request of the court further clarification as to the land in the suit and the land to which the suit does not apply. If the settlement's claim is accepted, a claim which seems to be based on facts, the problem will be solved.

The efforts to prepare a site for relocation, when the government does carry out the evacuation as per the court's ruling, are intended to prevent a confrontation whose results may be harmful. It is necessary to overcome the problem with as little friction as possible. At the same time the resolution of the legal status of lands in Judea and Samaria should be tackled ahead of time so that there are no more mishaps and lawsuits against settlers. This is a question of principle from a political and legal point of view, and it requires an overall solution.

The resolution of the ministerial committee has considerably advanced the issue of settlement. It includes compensation to Elon-Moreh when it has to relocate to another site in the region. The issue of Elon-Moreh hastened the adoption of the plan. Now its implementation has to be hastened.

The NRP ministers, who worked for the quick adoption of the overall settlement plan and for the compromise between the approach of the agriculture minister and that of the defense minister, had their efforts accepted by the prime minister and most of the other ministers. The progress raises hopes that there will be an appropriate solution to the issue of Elon-Moreh.

The main thing is to implement the plan, fully and on a timely basis. Finding the high sums for the establishment of new settlements in Judea and Samaria, when the economic plan mandates cutbacks in many areas, will probably be accompanied by explanations as to the national political and defense urgency of settlement. It may revive the spirit of the pioneers and have both old timers and new immigrants participate in it.

8646

CSO: 4805

HANDLING OF EXPULSION OF NABLUS MAYOR CRITICIZED

Jerusalem HAMODI'A in Hebrew 18 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Expulsion of Nablus' Mayor Handled Very Clumsily"]

[Text] The expulsion of Nablus' mayor is getting more and more complicated. There is a lot of unrest in the West Bank, strikes and other political activities of an unheard of level, as well as the resignation of the mayors. Outside there is international reaction which was joined by the United States when it gave its sanction to an anti-Israeli resolution in the UN. On second thought on events some doubts have arisen as to the wisdom of the moves that were taken and some poor judgments that were made. Is it worth the political price?

The editors do not criticize the decision to expel the mayor who overdid things. Bassam al-Shak'a is a black sheep. Those in the know claim that he should have been expelled a long time ago. There are charges that he did things against the security of the country and his identification with terror organizations and acts have long surpassed the stage of just talk. Outside intervention may achieve opposite results. But one cannot act on feelings alone. Logic, too, has to play a role in the evaluation.

The problem is that the whole affair was handled ineptly from the very beginning, starting with the hasty publication of the eye-to-eye conversation with the coordinator in the West Bank. It is doubtful whether there has ever been a precedence to a leak such as this, especially since it was done by an official. But when it was decided on a drastic action such as expulsion, it should have been carried out forthwith so as not to allow so much time for a widening opposition to be formed.

There were, in the past, expulsions of people from the West Bank and from East Jerusalem, when there was a need for it. But there was allowed for legal steps or for an organized reaction. True, there were reactions after the fact, but the deterrent effect was achieved. This time, looking back, we can say that the deterrent effect was not achieved and we may even have lost the chance to get rid of an inflammatory person. Other

mayors who support him may have had a good lesson in their relations with Israel. The result may be further complicated and the worsening of Israel's image when everybody is waiting to see how the autonomy talks for Judea and Samaria turn out. Now, if the expulsion affair is pointed out as a bad example it cannot strengthen those few who consider autonomy as a first step for further agreements.

The ministerial committee that met the previous week missed an opportunity to save face on this matter. After a delegation of mayors pleaded for Bassam al-Shak'a it voiced its exception to what had been said and wanted to hear the mayor himself. There was an opening to reconsider expulsion. But the committee, for its own political considerations, which are probably quite valid, did not take this route. Now it closed this door, too.

In view of the new complication and the moving of the issue to the international arena, in view of the negative reaction everywhere, the continued unrest on the West Bank and the fear that things will deteriorate even further, the decision ought to be reconsidered. True, any turnabout at this stage may be interpreted as yielding to international pressure. But sometimes all considerations should be taken into account.

8646
CSO: 4805

IRANIAN SIEGE OF EMBASSY SEEN AS TEST FOR U.S. ADMINISTRATION

Tel Aviv HAZOFEH in Hebrew 11 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Iranian Siege of the American Embassy Seen as Test for the Administration"]

[Text] United States President, Jimmy Carter, facing a fanatic reckless Iranian ruler, who gives his blessing to the terrorist activities of his followers, who took 60 hostages in the American Embassy in Tehran, has up to now been very patient in his efforts to release the hostages without any catastrophe. Khomeini criticizes the American administration which does not extradite the shah, who is hospitalized in New York. An excited mob on the streets of Tehran is going wild shouting slogans against the United States. At the same time the American administration would like to end the incident without bloodshed.

The longer the drama in Tehran lasts the more difficult it is for Carter and his administration. On the one hand use of power will cause international complications, at least from the USSR which borders Iran. On the other hand the large American people, whose citizens are insulted by a wild ruler, is frustrated by the weakness of its administration which does not react forcefully when Americans in Iran are mistreated.

The episode is in the center of international interest. Since Iran is headed by Khomeini, who acts according to his wild impulses, its reasonable end cannot be foreseen. In the meantime the PLO is trying to utilize the incident to further its own ends and is proposing to act as an intermediary between Khomeini and the Americans. Terrorists show up as intermediaries between Iranian terrorists and the American administration.

What is desired, first of all, is not to yield to the Iranian terrorists and to avoid handing the shah over to Khomeini. Secondly it is not desirable to resort to the help of the PLO, which is partner to the Iranian terror, because this will add to its political prestige. Thirdly it is desirable that the United States become independent of countries led by mad men when it comes to its oil supply. The treasury secretary said that the United States can do without the 4 percent of the oil it imports from Iran.

The Carter administration will be tested by its ability to end the incident honorably and by enlisting all its efforts to force the Iranian people to put an end to this regime which is throwing their country into chaos.

8646
CSO: 4805

ISRAEL

IDF FACES FINANCIAL PINCH

Tel Aviv HA'ARET in Hebrew 29 Nov 79 p 9

[Article by Ze'ev Shif: "Economic Crisis Will Force IDF Cutbacks"]

[Text] The IDF is fast approaching the moment of truth as to its ability to maintain its present size and scope in view of Israel's economic situation. The decision on the issue is postponed from week to week. It is not an easy one. On the one hand Israel's economy continues to decline. The ability to respond to the defense system's requests for enough funds so it can maintain what it has and develop at a reasonable pace so as to keep up the IDF's power is shrinking annually. At the same time the buying power of the dollars that we receive as defense aid from the United States is also shrinking. The Americans have stated clearly that they cannot increase the defense aid to Israel, especially since they had to budget huge sums to aid in the withdrawal of the IDF from the Sinai and the construction of the new airfields.

On the other hand it is clear that we are far from the end of the defense "calamities." The danger is as serious as ever. Peace with Egypt is not yet quite established and no one is willing to make a commitment that in the future, after the retreat from the Sinai, there will not suddenly be a defense revolution on our border with Egypt, or that Egypt will not join in a war initiated by the eastern front.

In addition, continued intelligence, supported by foreign sources, indicates that the armies of the eastern front are gradually growing in strength and are developing an independent military capability. In addition to the impressive conventional growth, there is also an effort to develop a nuclear capability by at least one Arab country--Iraq.

The defense system will not be able to postpone its decision for very long and the Finance Ministry will have to decide on its position regarding the needs of the IDF and the Defense Ministry. This author therefore estimates that soon there will be decisions on substantial cutbacks in the IDF and curtailment of activities in many areas. It will probably be announced ahead of time that the decision, with the risk involved, will be adopted by the whole government. It is not a matter for the Defense Ministry alone, but for the whole government.

Overly Optimistic Estimates

The difficulties started even before Hurvitz took office as finance minister. And to be truthful, Hurvitz has not yet started to do what he wants to, in terms of cutbacks from the defense system for the next fiscal year. The 1979 fiscal year started off wrong for the defense system. To begin with the budget was cut by IL1 billion. In the wave of the following cutbacks Weizman agreed to a reduction of IL3 billion. The Defense Ministry demanded that the Finance Ministry would make up for price hikes that would follow. Ehrlich promised Weizman that salary hikes would be fully covered.

The estimates of the Finance Ministry as to the expected price hikes turned out to be optimistic, or unrealistic. At the Finance Ministry it was estimated that salary hikes would be of 40 percent, that construction would go up by 50 percent and local acquisition would rise by 37 percent. Actually (until Hurvitz's steps were implemented) the hike in construction was of 113 percent and in acquisition from local industry 100 percent.

Even if the Finance Ministry keeps its commitment to fully cover salary hikes (i.e., it will add IL6.5 billion to Defense and put its budget at IL51.2 billion) the defense system will still be short IL6.5 billion, according to some experts. I.e., in addition to the cutbacks of IL4 billion the actual defense budget for 1979 was cut by an adjusted 20 percent. According to spokesmen this has not happened to any other ministry.

Thus, when it is clear that Hurvitz intends to institute further cutbacks in the government's budget there is no way to avoid drastic decisions. For a while it is still possible to utilize what is already in the "pipeline," but the moment of truth for decisions is drawing close. A decision will have to be made as to where to cut.

Should the regular army be cut back? Should maneuvers be curtailed? Should special projects for the development of weapon systems be given up with the firing of scientists and engineers? Should the arsenal and equipment be reduced and should we take the risk of going down to the "red line" on this issue? Should we give up on the construction of a new system, such as a warning system, to replace those that Israeli intelligence is losing in the Sinai or should we delay the purchase of new equipment to replace obsolete equipment?

A number of proposals are floating in the corridors of the Defense Ministry. For reasons of security it is impossible to mention all of them, or detail them fully. Even the harshest proposal realizes the fact that there will be no way out of real cutbacks. The question is where, to what extent and when should curtailments start. It is clear that this time it will not be possible to achieve cutbacks just by saving. Saving plans instituted by the chief of staff were very successful.

Lieutenant General Eytan talks of an accumulated saving of IL800 million. This is a welcome and vital action which should be continued. But in spite

of the accomplishments, no large sums of money can be realized from this direction. Now Lieutenant General Eytan proposes that those in the professional army volunteer to take a 5 percent cut in salary. Not everyone is willing to accept this proposal. Some maintain that not everyone has a farm like the chief of staff and if good people are to be attracted to the professional ranks, decent salaries have to be offered.

The real debate will concentrate on the question of whether to reduce the ranks of the IDF. There are those who support this proposal, although only a few.

In any event, the day may not be too far when the ranks of the IDF may have to be reduced. This time has not yet come. As long as relations with Egypt have not yet stabilized the regular army should not be reduced. The risk is too high.

This position is valid, at this stage, for the infantry and the air force. Not so for the navy. The subject of the navy deserves special consideration, but for the sake of this discussion it should be pointed out that following the retreat from the Sinai there has been a substantial change in one of the two naval fronts. The reliance on only one port, Elat, which is within cannon range from both Jordan and Saudi Arabia, should bring about a reorganization of the operational thinking on the Red Sea front. It is very complicated to talk about an Israeli naval force which will insure free navigation in the Red Sea all the way to Bab-el-Mandeb. Therefore it is natural that following the withdrawal from the Sinai the stress of the navy should be on the Mediterranean.

In view of the strengthening of the enemy's navies, it is impossible that this change will not be felt in the navy's budget. Of course it will, even if the Egyptian navy is no longer considered hostile. Orders for new equipment for old ships should not be cancelled, but in view of the difficult economic situation it is obvious that new decisions have to be made.

What Should Be Cut?

What should not be cut? It seems to this author that we ought to be careful to not cut back too much on the arsenal and equipment which we may need in a rush in case of a sudden war (when it is doubtful that another airlift will be available). We should be careful to not cut the intelligence early warning system, which has to be reestablished quickly following the withdrawal from the Sinai. We should also be careful and not cut on combat units, the "teeth" of the IDF, certainly not now.

What can be cut? Some of the IDF commands have to be carefully evaluated for cuts, in both permanent and reserve personnel. Major General Tal reorganization plan should be reexamined, although it was originally rejected. The possibility of cutbacks in the professional ranks should be examined, but not at the expense of combat units. The number of days served in the reserves should be reduced, so should the number of civilians in the IDF.

The renewal of obsolete equipment should be continued, but at a slower pace. It seems to this author that when development plans are examined, there will not be a way out of cutbacks in the plans to produce the new fighter plane "Arye." The decision on it has been put off endlessly and it is possible that development should have been in a totally different direction. For example, instead of a plane to compete with the F-15, the development of a simpler plane should have been undertaken, such as will replace the "Kfir" in the future. There will also be no choice but to decide on a slower pace of construction in the Negev.

Even if this is the trend, it seems that we will be forced to substantially curtail the IDF activities. If regular units are not eliminated present budgets cannot be continued without affecting power.

This is a decision that the IDF has to take, but it would be prudent if the defense minister presented it for government approval and if he explains it in detail.

8646
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NRP DEMANDS ON EDUCATION, SABBATH LAW OUTLINED

Tel Aviv HAZOFEH in Hebrew 16 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "NRP Demands for the Next Two Years Detailed To Include Laws on Education, the Sabbath, Abortion and More"]

[Text] The representatives of the NRP in the Knesset and the government deal with foreign affairs, defense matters, social and economic issues and the problems of settlement in Judea and Samaria. The influence of the NRP ministers in this government should be commended as it enables them to be active participants in decisions on all vital issues of the country. In all previous governments the NRP ministers were purposely blocked from having a voice on foreign affairs, the economy, settlements and social issues.

The NRP is the largest religious party which acquired its position because of its public campaigns on the values, laws and ways of Judaism in the country and because of its accomplishments and activities in this area. In the next 2 years of this Knesset the party ought to devote proper wisdom and energy necessary to adopt its various demands for legislation on Jewish issues. Among them a law against frauds in kashrut; the Sabbath law; the right to be hired for any job and nondiscriminatory hiring of workers who refuse to work on the Sabbath; an amendment to the anatomy pathology law; broadening the scope of the rabbinical courts so that their rulings on fiscal issues, with the concurrence of both sides, will be considered final; the law of registering people as Jews only if they are so according to theology; the struggle to abolish the social section of the abortion law that the NRP conducted together with Agudat Israel is one more issue of the coalitionary agreement which has to pass.

The NRP set down its demands in the area of education. "It will insist on the rights of religious education and on offering the same level of education to all segments of the population. The party will fight to insure financial and administrative conditions for both types of education which will enable equal opportunity for each... In the spirit of the education law of the country the NRP wants to ensure the religious education and the branch for training of religious leaders full autonomy in all educational activities.

Autonomy should be particularly stressed in the area of educational plans in all stages and in further training of religious teachers. As for additional social training there should be total independence from any concern which does not identify with the principles of national-religious training. The branch for religious education in the Education Ministry should be given all the necessary tools."

The leaders of religious education will consider the full implementation of these basic demands as full equality of national-religious education.

A law on the rabbinate should be passed and the elections to the chief rabbinate council should be held in the coming year. The institution should be properly established with elections and the choosing of chief rabbies of real stature in theology, behavior and in respect to each other. This is necessary for the prestige of the chief rabbinate so it is an example, as was said: "Thou shalt love peace and truth."

The NRP would like to help the government out of its difficulties. Its representatives have proven that. It was with their initiative that complex problems found solutions so that the government can survive its term. The government still faces dangers, both from within and from without. It is necessary to fully implement what has already been promised and agreed upon. The preparation for this ought to be on both an educational and organizational level. Education has to be both oral and in writing, all of which has to be on the proper level quantitatively and qualitatively. The voice of the NRP should reach the thousands of its members and supporters daily.

8646
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AMENDMENT ON ABORTION REJECTED

Tel Aviv HAZOFEH in Hebrew 13 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Disappointment with The Rejection of The Amendment to The Abortion Law Should Induce The Religious Community To Work Harder for Its Passage in The Future"]

[Text] The results of the vote on abolishing the social section of the abortion law was met with applause by the opposition and its supporters from among the Liberals and Democrats. The amendment did not pass. A lot of efforts were put into swinging votes, even for one single vote. The vote was by name. But the hoped for results were not achieved. The votes were equally divided.

The Alignment wanted to topple the government and impose on it the shock of a crisis. The Democrats, who enjoy two advantages, an excess of representation in the government and an excess of rights over obligations, demonstrated their secularism. Even the justice minister joined the demonstration whose public honesty is very doubtful. The Democrats know full well that the vote could have spelled the demise of the government. After all, they are members of the coalition. But these representatives of a dying selfishness to be members of the coalition, while at the same time they openly do as they please.

The Liberal Party signed the coalitionary agreement with the religious parties, the NRP and Agudat Israel. Some of its members made a mockery of the agreement by voting against the amendment or by abstaining. The Liberal conscience, so to speak, rejected a written and signed agreement. The duty to keep a promise also belongs, or so it seems, to the area of conscience.

It is possible that the count before the vote was inaccurate. This kind of a decision has to wait for an opportune moment. The defeat is aggravating. Now planning has to be made to propose the amendment again, at a suitable time, when it is known ahead of time that it has a chance of passing.

The difficulties in passing Jewish legislation in the Knesset, even laws that intend to preserve the existence of the people and its basic values, have to

be recognized. The campaign to abolish the social section of the abortion law, which is tantamount to legalized murder of unborn children, is a Jewish campaign for the sanctity of life, in total opposition to idolatry, which puts convenience ahead of life. This is a campaign for something very basic, since man was created in God's image.

The Knesset does not interfere with a person's privacy. There were abortions before this section was passed and there is no guarantee that they will stop even after the amendment is passed. But the Knesset of the Jewish state is obligated to prevent legislation which is in opposition to Jewish law, a law which considers killing of unborn children as murder to which the biblical law applies: "A killer of humans in humans shall pay with blood." The allegation is clearly to unborn children.

The chief rabbinical council in Israel in its ruling adds that the law endangers the continuing existence, growth and development of the Jewish people that only one generation ago lost a full third of its sons and daughters in the Nazi death camps. The law endangers the natural growth in Israel since, according to calculations, 1 million lives were lost to abortions since the establishment of the state. The law helps the enemy who is afraid of our growth and transgresses the first commandment "thou shalt multiply and fill the earth." This is a law whose total abolition is vital to the people and the state and wide segments of the public have to be convinced to join the campaign.

In spite of the disappointment with the vote the efforts of Likud's leadership ought to be commended, especially those of the prime minister, who tried to enlist a majority for passage. The NRP and Agudat Israel, when they demand implementation of the coalitionary agreement, ought to remember that there is a real chance to carry it out with this government. All parliamentary maneuvers should be explored in order to bring the amendment to another vote and a more suitable time.

The coalition should learn a thorough lesson from this vote. Those who want its continued existence should stick to a written and signed agreement without hiding behind an organized conscience. One more lesson is to somewhat dilute the boastfulness of the Democrats whose hypocrisy is nauseating.

The religious community faces secular-political abuse and should adopt a balanced position of principles, and accompany its moves with education of all stratas of the public on the meaning of the amendment. This way there will be some chance that at the next vote, as in other votes on issues that are part of the coalitionary agreement, the government will fulfill what it promised when it was established.

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ISRAEL

EDITORIAL SAYS ELON-MOREH SETTLERS SHOULD ACCEPT GOVERNMENT COMPROMISE

Tel Aviv HAZOFEH in Hebrew 19 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Elon-Moreh Settlers Should Accept the Government's Compromise on Resettling on Another Site"]

[Text] The government summed up its compromise on Elon-Moreh on 18 November by decision to implement the evacuation in two steps and establish a new settlement site, to replace the site that is to be evacuated, on condition that the settlers agree to move to the new location. The resolution was adopted on top of previous resolutions adopted by the ministerial committee for settlement. Those resolutions pertain to an overall settlement plan to include five settlement clusters in Judea and Samaria.

The problem of settlement in Judea and Samaria has not yet been solved since the plan may be stayed by further court rulings. But there is no doubt that if another court challenge is raised the government will start a thorough job of tackling settlements legally so as to avoid foiling the whole project with legal manuevers of West Bank citizens who are supported by hostile concerns.

If Gush Emunim and the settlers reject the government's proposal and enter into a confrontation with IDF forces that will be ordered to evacuate them, they will not be able to turn to public opinion for support. Any such move will mean the loss of one settlement, since, according to the government's resolution, IL70 million will be spent on the new settlement so as to absorb the people of Elon-Moreh. If the settlers do not agree to evacuate the government will refrain from establishing the new settlement. Thus the goodwill exhibited toward the settlers by the government will be lost and the goal of settling Judea and Samaria will be jeopardized when the new settlement is not established instead of the evacuated one. And then, what good was the resolution?

Logic, too, should be utilized in these struggles in order to achieve the goal. The struggle for an important, holy goal requires some setbacks for future progress and for reorganization. Stubbornness in this case is incomprehensible whereas avoiding a confrontation is also a goal that should be attained. The government has come a long way toward the settlers of Elon-Moreh. Now it is their turn to come toward it.

8646

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EDITORIAL URGES REDUCING INFLATION AS PRIMARY GOAL OF ECONOMIC PLAN

Jerusalem HAMODIA in Hebrew 18 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "Cutting Inflation Should Be Primary Goal of the Economic Plan"]

[Text] The rise in the cost of living index was expected. Next month, too, will bring no alleviation. An additional hike is expected. What has happened up to now is enough. The rise of the cost of living index in the past 10 months was of 78.2 percent and this is enough to stagger anyone. People are beginning to feel the price hikes very well. Maybe not so much in the upper classes. But it sure has had an effect on the lower classes.

Maybe some people are toying with the idea that we may at least achieve a lowering of the standard of living, which is an important goal in itself. But it seems that this will hurt mostly the lower classes. The upper classes, the people with high incomes, does not seem, at this point anyway, to be affected. Business is as usual and the standard of living continues to rise to new heights.

The main goal that should have guided the government was to halt inflation, and it can do it. But it turns out that it lost control. Not only does it not have any control over prices, but it seems that the government even encourages price hikes by planning or by silence, which is tantamount to admission. It seems that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has lost all defenses and people do as they please.

Price hikes interfere with commerce. Producers and distributors cannot make any commitment without tackling it to the cost of living index. Finished goods cannot be sold on credit, since money received at a later date may not be sufficient to cover production costs. Those close to business know what confusion the inflation factor introduces.

The lower classes are hurt. No compensation can maintain a standard of living, even a minimal one. The finance minister should lay aside all activities and initiate freezes of prices, salaries and services. Deep slashes in the budget should be implemented, and before the live flesh is reached there still will remain a lot of fat. But cuts should not affect the standard of living of the lower stratas, the citizens who are eagerly awaiting these steps.

ISRAEL

CAUTION REGARDING NEW ECONOMIC PLAN URGED

Tel Aviv HAZOFEH in Hebrew 19 Nov 79 p 2

[Editorial: "New Economic Plan Should Be Approached Cautiously"]

[Text] The new finance minister, Yig'al Hurvitz, presented a new economic plan on 18 November. The plan is designed to revitalize the economy. Many new plans have been proposed to the government recently, but only a few of them got to the implementation stage. None of them did very much to revitalize the economy. Inflation continues at a staggering pace and the economy has not recovered. Therefore the new plan should be taken with a grain of salt since its test will be in implementation.

The main items in the new plan of the finance minister are halting inflation, by budgetary cutbacks, slowing down of development and transfer of workers from services to industry and production. The plan is a gamble. If it succeeds it may have some positive effects. If it fails it will bring about a new downfall. Therefore it should be approached cautiously by all concerned both in the government and in the economy.

The plan has some bad news: The suspension of construction of schools, youth centers and roads, cutbacks in social services and in the standard of living, although it was promised that real salaries will not decline. Actually the plan means a new recession. The plan means to tackle both the standard of living and inflation. The question is: Does it really offer economic salvation in the long run or is it one more move and attempt to tackle the economic problem, an attempt that will not achieve the goals but will hurt the lower and middle class.

In order for the plan to be implemented it is necessary that the government and the Histadrut cooperate. It is doubtful that the Histadrut will be willing to cooperate when political concerns sometimes have a decisive influence on its moves.

For all these reasons the plan should be approached very cautiously since it has both good changes and some risks.

8646
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PAPER REPORTS STRINGENT VISA RESTRICTIONS FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS

LD041515 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH / Arabic 2 Jan 80 pp 1, 15 LD

[Unattributed "Special Report"]

[Text] From now onward, a rab or foreign journalist can secure a visa to visit Kuwait before a high-level government approval is obtained. AL-SIYASAH has learned that strict instructions have been given to [Kuwait] embassies abroad not to grant visas to any journalist (editor, correspondent or photographer) before referring the matter to the Information Ministry including full details about the journalist and the purpose of his visit to the country. It is believed that these stringent measures are the result of the agreement reached among the information ministers of the Gulf and Arabian peninsula states during their recent meeting in Riyadh. The ministers had the clear impression that there was a premediated international propaganda campaign aimed against the Gulf Arab states and that this campaign must be confronted by all means. Details were available to the information ministers about the irregular tasks for which some foreign journalists had come to the area where they used to spend a few days and then go back to write a series of lies, false information and biased impressions.

An example of this was the second-rate British journalist who visited Kuwait in December and then went back to his country to write articles that contained so many fallacies and distortions that necessitated an investigation into the manner in which he had obtained a visa to enter Kuwait. In any case, the present general tendency in the area is to be strict in these matters so that the Gulf states will not remain subject to international campaigns of distorted information.

CSO: 4802

MAURITANIA

NATIONAL FEELING POWERFUL ENOUGH TO INSURE SURVIVAL

Paris LE MONDE in French 6-7, 8, 9 Jan 80

[Series of articles by Paul Balta: "Mauritania: Country Fighting for its Life"--passages in slantlines published in italics]

[6-7 Jan 80 p 5]

[Excerpts] I. Palace Revolution in Mauritania

Lt Col Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla, ex-first vice president of the Military Committee of National Salvation, overthrew the Mauritanian chief of state, Lt Col Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Louly on Friday, 4 January, and seized the position for himself. Lt Col Ould Haidalla, who retains the position as head of government which he has held since 3 June 1979, also became president of the Military Committee of National Salvation by replacing the former chief of state.

Also, three members of the "permanent committee" of the Military Committee are out of office: Lt Col Ahmed Salem Ould Sidi, second vice president; Maj Thiam El Hadj, who was also minister of youth and sports; and Lt Col Cheikh Ould Boyde, comptroller general of the state and onetime chief of police.

A communique from the Military Committee states that the change of leaders which occurred Friday evening in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania was for the purpose of "getting ride of all who are not working with commitment and determination toward the task of national recovery." The communique adds that the leadership shuffle is also aimed at the goal of adapting the political structure to the important tasks of economic recovery, financial and administrative reform, and political consolidation. It was not spelled out whether there will be changes within the Mauritanian Government.

We publish below the first installment of an investigation by Paul Balta, who was in Nouakchott shortly before the "palace revolution."

We publish below the first installment of an investigation by Paul Balta, who was in Nouakchott shortly before the "palace revolution."

The capital city is nearer to St-Louis-du-Senegal (300 km) than to Bir-Moghrine (formerly Fort-Trinquet) adjacent to the Algerian border, some 1k000 km to the northeast, even closer than to Atar on the southern border with Western Sahara. In the streets, one would believe oneself in the camps of the POLISARIO Front in the Tindouf region. The only difference: the inhabitants of Nouakchott have substituted wooden huts for the tents of the Saharaouis refugees; and the city, established by former president Mokhtar Ould Dadda in the time of the "ksar" (old traditional city), contains two beautiful sections: one for the ambassadors, ministers, mosques built by Saudi Arabia and Morocco, and one for the new headquarters of SNIM [National Industrial and Mining Company] and the SMAR [National Insurance Company of Mauritania].

King Hassan II himself recently underlined the kinship of the Saharaouis and Mauritanians, who belong to great nomadic family of the Maures. On the scene, the resemblance is striking; same bronzed faces that recall those of the Yemeni, same blue or white boubous [translation unknown], same haughty demeanor, same customs, in particular the tea which is served three times in small glasses, the same exquisite politeness, same tendency to express oneself indirectly, same Arabic dialect--the Tassoniya--similar to the one on the Arabian Peninsula, so different from the speech of the Maghreb, same unveiled women who hold their own as well in the tent as in the house and on the street.

The Maures as well as the blacks--a third of the population--talk willingly of these similarities, but also of the differences existing between these two communities, to the extent that the two are essential factors in any settlement of the Saharan conflict. This latter, an ongoing nightmare, is at the center of all talk. The government of Lt Col Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla, the third since the coup d'etat of 10 July 1978, indeed got out of the war by signing the 5 August peace accord in Algiers with the POLISARIO Front, and by in effect breaking the military alliance concluded by the old regime with the throne of the shereef; but no one believes for all that that it is "out of the picture," in the words of one diplomat.

The Most Frightening Theory

The minister of foreign affairs, Mr Ahmadou Ould Abdallah, tries to exercise threats, covetings, and entreaties by repeating, as he did again in early December, before the committee of wise men of the OAU, meeting in Monrovia, that Mauritania is neutral, that it is equidistant from Algiers

and Rabat, and that it is no longer taking part in the conflict. Everyone knows or urges, though, that it cannot dissociate itself from the way it is resolved, since all outcomes affect its future.

The most frightening theory, much as one wishes to believe it improbable here, assumes /"the annexation of the Western Sahara by Rabat"/: jealous of their independence, but aware of their weakness which derives in large part from the tribalism tolerated, if not cultivated, by the Ould Daddah regime, the Mauritanians fear the "old devils" of Morocco, suspected of wanting to destabilize their country in order to recapture it. The pretexts would be simple to find, as the POLISARIO Front commands support in the population of the north (just as it benefits from the complicity of the inhabitants of southern Morocco, we would stress) and even secret bases, while the regime in place in Nouakchott is far from being homogeneous.

The creation of a small Saharan state in the Province of Oued-ed-Dahab (Rio-de-Oro for the Spanish, Tiris-el-Charbia for the Mauritanians), which would extend even beyond Saguinet-el-Hamra but would not include the phosphates region of Bou-Craa, arouses fears, too. In fact, such a state would hardly be viable, unless it should federate or unite with Mauritania, which would pose several dangers to the latter. In the first place, as do some French and American diplomats, various leaders are wondering whether, /"by the force of circumstances and quite naturally,"/ the Saharaouis will not rule Nouakchott, in spite of the commitments made by the POLISARIO Front in the Algiers accord, in which it /"declares solemnly that it does not have and will not have territorial or other claims against Mauritania."/ Next, the incorporation of additional Maures risks accentuating the ethnic imbalance to the detriment of the blacks and provoking dangerous tensions. Finally, even though the threat of the secession of the black African populations be exaggerated abroad, the government cannot forget that the southern region, bordering the Senegal River, is and will become more and more the "bread-basket" of the country, and thus must be carefully tended.

The recognition of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic seems, to many, to give promise of an acceptable solution. Very politicized, highly structured, having devoted considerable efforts to overcoming tribalism, and trying to become a modern nation, tempered by war, the Saharaouis--Mauritanians believe--will be able to assert their independence of their powerful neighbors even while turning their energy to governing their territory. In these conditions, a federation between the two states could be envisaged which would become by this fact a force for balance and stability in the region.

The Historic Role of the Maures

The Muslim world has always been sympathetic to the proselytizing of the Maures, because the thundering Arabic conquest begun in the 7th Century, had been stopped at the doorstep of /bilad el Soudane/ (the world of the blacks), by the tse-tse fly, which felled the horses. /"It is the role, more than the desire to counter Algerian influence, which has led Saudi Arabia and the gulf states to bring us considerable financial aid,"/ assert the counsellors of the prime minister. It is also this role and its position as a peaceful buffer state which have brought Mauritania many favors in the OAU. /"Without this diplomatic cover brought by Ould Daddah,"/ one says these days in Nouakchott, /"Hassan II would never have had a chance to advance Morocco's pretensions to the Spanish Sahara."/

In return, the tribes in the north and the interior, especially the Reguibet, have always been particularly independent warriors, who ceaselessly made war against all powers that tried to subject them. This tradition will all the more easily be maintained in the 20th Century, as the Spanish penetration into the Western Sahara will lack the depth of the French penetration into Mauritania. Besides, it was French troops who, in the beginning of the century, prevented Sheikh Ma el Ainine (or Malainine), lord of the holy city of Smara, from conquering the throne of shereef and installing a Saharan dynasty to replace that of the Alaouites*.

/"At the time of independence,"/ one of the 10 July plotters told us, /"power was in the hands of the interpreters and the members of Ould Daddah's tribe who had collaborated with France.

"In the period 1969-1980, President Boumedienne played the Maghreb of the states [as published]. Algeria had therefore supported Ould Daddah against the majority of the national groups. The regime had succeeded in winning back the latter by accepting their conditions: leaving the franc zone, nationalizing the iron mines encouraging national industry, and more rigorous control of the economy."/

As much because of ethnic solidarity as political calculation, the Mauritians, whose interest was to be separated from Morocco by a buffer zone, were the first to aid and shelter the Saharaouis insurgents disappointed by the weak support they had found in Rabat. Thus, Mr El Bendir, present perfect of Boutelimit, Mr Ould Daddah's old fiefdom, 150 km from the capital: /"I was one of the seven founding members at Zouerate of the embryonic liberation movement, sprung from the FLS [Seguia Liberation Front] in 1971, and from which was born the POLISARIO Front, whose constitutional convention was held 10 May 1973.

* "Introduction to Mauritania," anthology, published by National Center for Scientific Research [CNRS], Paris, 1979.

I was with El Ouali, first secretary general of the front, with Abdelaziz, his successor, Mohamed Lamine, who was to become the prime minister of the SDAR in 1977. I was also military chief of the southern zone..."/ After a silence, he confides: /"I left the front in 1976 when it was decided to assault Nouadhibou. My whole family was there; for me, it was a story of conscience."/

Like all Mauritians, Mr El Bendir wanted to avoid a fratricidal war. El Ouali, for his part, who knew Ould Daddah well, had appealed to him to renounce his alliance with Rabat and form a federated state with the Saharaouis. Unsuccessful, he organized the attack against Nouakchott in which he was killed on 8 June 1976. He had hoped the populace would rise up and overthrow the regime. The secret accord dividing up the Western Sahara concluded in October 1974 between Hassan II and Ould Daddah and the entry of the country into the conflict had torn apart the national movement, which was no longer able to mobilize the people.

Constrained to support an unprecedented military effort, subject to ruinous attacks, all the more efficacious as they benefited from the complicity of a populace proud of the martial epic of the fraternal Saharaouis people, Mauritania found itself three years after the start of the conflict on the verge of bankruptcy, and threatened with collapse. The advantage derived from the intervention of the French Jaguars was largely neutralized by the passive resistance of a people unanimously hostile to the war. It is against this backdrop that the army, as a last resort, seized power on 10 July 1978.

Next article: "The Outburst of Patriotism"

[8 Jan p 9]

II. The Outburst of Patriotism

/"The 10 July outburst of patriotism aimed to preventing the disappearance of the state--absent which Mauritania would have stood a good chance of being wiped off the map,"/ one of the old conspirators told us privately. Eighteen months after the coup, on the eve of the 4 January palace revolution, a climate of caution, if not distrust, reigned in Nouakchott. Undeniably the appearance of three successive military cabinets in less than one year made people think.

/"The coup was the work,"/ our noble informant continues, /"of a handful of soldiers and civilians going from the left to the rightist center. It was revenge for Hodh--the most populous and richest region, but also the most neglected--over the southeast of the country which held power since independence because colonization started with them."/ Even though silence is the rule among members of the group that overthrew Mokhtar Ould Daddah, its principal leaders are known, among them some who in fact come from Hodh, as are known the reasons which led to the elimination of some and the retention of others.

A highly politicized officer of the left, major Jiddou Ould Salek was the "brains" of the conspiracy. Discarded in March 1979 for appearing too sympathetic to the POLISARIO Front, he died in a traffic accident that occurred by absolutely random chance, according to the official version, and strangely, according to some of his friends. He had been rather close to two ousted civilian ministers, Mr Sid Ahmed Bijeira (finance) and Mr Mohamed Ould Brezilei (culture), and to Maj Moulaye Ould Boukhreiss, a man of character, presently minister of planning and fishing.

The group also included less politically motivated soldiers, such as Lt Col Ould Haidalla, the new chief of state these days, known for his courage and integrity; Lt Col Viyah, believed to be pro-Moroccan, a former chief of staff; Lt Col Mustapha Ould Salek, the most senior officer, a status which brought him the presidency of the Military Committee for National Salvation (CMRN) and the leadership of the country, before being discharged by a previous palace revolution in April 1979. He had brought with him into the coup several men of affairs, like the former minister of foreign affairs, Mr Cheikhna Ould Mohamed Ladghaf, and the ex-director of SNIM, who had not survived, politically, his disgrace.

Tension With Rabat

Despite its composite character, this group has as a goal putting an end to the war and proceeding to the indispensable task of economic recovery while fighting against generalized corruption and nepotism. All this time, the first government of Mr Mohamed Ould Salek and the first military committee (CMRN) were progressively undermined from within by their contradictions, aggravated by Rabat's game of trying to torpedo all possibilities of negotiating an overall peace.

The tension between the two states reaches such a point that in his New Year's message in 1979 President Ould Salek gives a warning: /"Mauritania will take all necessary measures to get definitively out of the war,"/ he asserts, adding: /"If the road leading to an overall settlement remains unfeasible, we have decided on peace and concord, and we will not accept any situation of deliberate obstruction"/ He is speaking in reality as much to Rabat and to the great powers as to a populace impatient with internal deterioration.

The regime, in effect, undertook a certain liberalization on the economic plane, but did not resolve any of the big problems still up in the air. Waste continues at an unslackened pace. Thus, so much of the \$30 million borrowed from Saudi Arabia in 1978 disappeared that Riyadh, which had promised 100 million, had to directly reimburse creditors 20 million in 1979 and reserved the \$50 million remaining to the financing of specific known-cost projects in the areas of fishing and agriculture. To give an idea of the confusion, the World Bank states that the government recently

reduced by 500 percent the operating budget of the ministries without really affecting their efficiency.

Ethnic Problems

Finally, serious racial problems added to the others to contribute to the destabilization of the regime. On the eve of independence the population, according to French authorities, was two-thirds Maures and one-third blacks. Today, the total population being estimated at 2 million, some people advance the following figures: 68 percent for the former, 32 percent for the latter, who are divided as follows: 20 percent Peuls and 12 percent Wolofs and Soninkes. Some blacks assert, however, that they are "close to 50 percent," but are not in a position to prove it.

The causes of friction between the two communities are principally linguistic and social. To be sure, the linguistic frictions, because they principally concern the elite, are better known than the others, especially since the incidents which gave rise to the others took place in rural areas. Profiting by the overthrow of the old regime, the /harratins/, descendants of black slaves of long ago, tried in August 1978 to challenge the ancestral feudal order by demanding the land they cultivate. They clashed head on, often violently, with their Maur masters, assisted by the regional militia. This peasant uprising was at least as much a class as an ethnic phenomenon.

With regard to language, the Maures believe that the French colonization, coming from the south, favored the blacks, who were, by virtue of this fact, numerous in the administration, /"in the case,"/ they say, /"more than 30 percent of the complement,"/ a fact which remains to be proven. But even if it were, the weight of evidence would show that many of them occupy the inferior positions. The black elite, for their part, reproach the Maures with wanting to impose their own language and trying to exclude their children from social advancement, by giving extra weight to proficiency in Arabic. It is incontestable that at the end of the 1978-79 school year the examination results were catastrophic for the blacks and excited virtual riots.

A Real Solidarity

/"The linguistic problem has been exacerbated by the most chauvinistic elements of the two communities, and has been envenomed for political ends, by the Senegalese press and certain French newspapers close to the scene and by neocolonialist lobbies,"/ asserts an adviser of Lt Col Haidalla. He recalls, too, that at the height of the tension, President Senghor, who does not hide his support for the ideas of Hassan II, threatened to ask for self-determination for the black African populations of Mauritania if the Saharaouis people won their sovereignty.

Moreover, like Rabat, he had accused the POLISARIO Front of summarily executing black prisoners, which, according to Nouakchott, was not proven. At the end of the month of March, a certain Alioune Diaw announced in Dakar the creation of a /"Walfougui Front for the Armed Liberation of Mauritanian Blacks."/

It certainly seems that these various events were consciously orchestrated, if one judges by what has happened since. In fact, as soon as Lieutenant Colonel Haidalla came to power, and even before he had time to address himself to the linguistic question, the climate changed. Must one attribute this change to the solemn support brought by Paris after the signing of the peace accord with the POLISARIO Front? It is clear, in any case, that the racial tension subsided. Likewise, President Senghor states, following a visit to Nouakchott, that the "misunderstanding" was cleared up, and nothing further was heard of the Walfougui Front.

The French ambassador is assured that the factors for reconciliation between the two communities are more important and profound than the motives for division. In Western diplomatic circles, it is even said that the chance is practically nil that the black population along the north bank of the Senegal River would secede.

/"Blacks and Maures are linked, not only by Islam, but also by a long common history,"/ a French diplomat told us. He added: /"The blacks are proud of being Mauritians because they recognize the qualities of the Maures, they have the possibility of protecting their rights, they exercise some influence on policy, they play a not negligible role in public life and in the world of affairs. They hold, in particular, the majority of technical positions and master the technology disdained by the Maures. In turn, they know very well that if they opted for Senegal, they would be more a minority than they are in their present country; worse, they would be as marginal, with respect to the center of power, which is in Dakar, as their brothers on the other side of the river."/

Has Paris corrected, or shall we say modified, its previous analyses? A number of Mauritians, for their part, emphasize that France's interest is not only to guarantee the independence and integrity of Mauritania, but also to support the /"balanced reconstitution of the great Saharo-Mauritanian family."/ Have they been understood?

However that may be, in the spring of 1979 President Ould Salek, exposed to all these difficulties which he could not control, was being reproached by his peers at the same time for conducting a hesitant policy and for exercising a personal power. Feeling threatened by Maj Jiddou Ould Salek, he reacted in the week of 20 March by a /"legal coup"/. Relying on the faction which wanted to eliminate the progressives, he got the Constitutional Charter promulgated in the aftermath of 10 July revised to give himself full powers. He dismissed the ministers supportive of the Saharaouis and Algeria and, for good measure, a pro-Moroccan minister.

On 6 April, Lt Col Ahmed Ould Bouceif, aided by a group of pro-Western officers who did not participate in the overthrow of the old regime, seized power in a palace revolution. He assumed effective power by appropriating the position of prime minister whereas Mr Mustapha Ould Salek, who was retained as president, took up a purely ceremonial role. The CMRN was recast and transformed into the Military Committee for National Salvation; paradoxically, it was going to play very soon a role no one even thought of giving it.

Meanwhile, /"the regime of officers of the eleventh hour,"/ as its predecessors in power call it, seemed to move toward a restoration. Mr Ould Bouceif stated: /"We are not the heirs of 10 July,"/ indicated that Mr Ould Daddah had /"certainly made mistakes,"/ but /"deserves to be rehabilitated,"/ let it be known that the arrested ministers would be freed, talked of the natural alliance with Morocco, and promised a new direction.

The CMSN, which remained at the fount of power, appreciated neither this policy, nor this change of direction, which risked plunging the country again into war. The prime minister was disavowed by the committee, which voted against him on several points and rejected his budget. Several officers close to him, including Lt Col Mohamed Ould Ba Ould Abdel Kader, who would later go to Morocco to create a movement of /"free officers,"/ were accused of waste and embezzlement of funds. Lieutenant Colonel Bouceif was killed 28 May in an airplane accident while on a trip to Dakar. His death saved the country a confrontation which seemed inevitable.

The CMSN, meeting 31 May, designated Lieutenant Colonel Ould Haidalla as prime minister. There were several reasons for the choice. Modest, self-effacing, taciturn, this old Saint-Cyrien at 40 years old was also very energetic. Unlike some of his comrades--not to speak of civilians--he did not enrich himself during the war, and his courage is proverbial. It is told that the radio, under the old regime, was always speaking of /"our valiant armed forces"/ and that, in derision, the people would describe as /"valiant"/ some of the officers most in public view. This oblique insult was never addressed to him.

Born in the Western Sahara, Mr Ould Haidalla had sympathy for the Saharaouis, but he inflicted severe losses on them each time he had to repel their attacks against Mauritania. In turn, on 10 July 1978, it was the Moroccan forces which he was charged with holding in awe at Zouerate in order to forestall a coup. Finally, his membership in the Laroussi tribe, reknowned for its priestly wisdom and its valient fighters, but also one of the smallest, was a factor for balance and a guarantee of equity in a country where the tribal problem remains important.

All these trumps were obviously played during the new palace revolution of 4 January 1980. In a regime which prided itself above all in severity and

its fight against corruption, the prime minister who incarnated these virtues acceded to the presidency, while the leaders considered "soft" were discarded.

As chief of government, Mr Mohamed Ould Haidalla had in 6 months settled two of the three great problems confronting Mauritania: on 5 August 1979, he put an end to the war by the peace accord concluded with the POLISARIO Front; in October, the expanded CMSN adopted a linguistic reform, which satisfied the blacks. Finally, in the month of June, he attacked the economic and financial questions which are, from a distance, the hardest to resolve, and which take the greatest time to resolve. He has already gotten creditable--though fragile--results.

[9 Jan 80 p 9]

III. The Recovery

As one goes out from the center of the capital, where embassies and villas are surrounded by vast flowered gardens, one comes to poorer and poorer quarters looming up out of the sand. The first concrete houses were built on land donated to the destitute on a nontransferable basis; they were nonetheless bought back by businessmen and notables of the old regime who surrendered themselves to shameless speculation. Next come miserable wooden huts built in the /"primitive"/ manner, then the sadly familiar /"fifth district"/ where ragged tents alternate with shelter made of boughs and rags.

Nomads and rural types have invaded the capital, which numbers today more than 200,000 inhabitants, compared to 150,000 in 1975, out of a total population estimated at 2 million souls. Nouadhibou, Zouerate, Rosso, and the other towns have seen the same phenomenon. Boutilimit, 150 km from Nouakchott, grew in 5 years from 6,000 to 27,000, and the number is expected to double again in 5 more years. This influx, we were told by a high official, was caused as much by drought as by war.

Once the peace was signed, the newcomers remained. It is true that drought, which has persisted for 15 years, now seems to be the result of an enduring climatic change which is going to modify the ancestral mode of life. The present regime will have to take account of this phenomenon to an even greater degree as the old regime neglected the rural sector. This latter contributes today only 20 percent of the GNP--\$500 million--against nearly 60 percent 20 years ago, while in 5 years the proportion of city dwellers has grown from 30 to 70 percent, requiring the country to import in 1979 some 800,000 tons of grain. This legacy is all the more heavy a bur'en in that the military governments before that of Mr Mohamed Ould Haidalla did not follow the /"economic recovery plan"/ elaborated in September 1978 and allowed the financial situation to grow worse. On 31 March 1979, the external debt passed \$750 million--50 percent more than the GNP--while revenues were only about half as much as expenditures.

Foreign Aid

Since its formation, the government of Mr Haidalla--when he was prime minister--had taken emergency financial measures. The 1979 budget, which had grown from 11 to 13 billion ouguiyas, was brought back to 11 billion (10 ouguiyas = 1 franc); the operational authorizations of the ministries were reduced by 50 percent in July and, in the context of an austerity plan, an effective fight was waged against waste and corruption. According to the governor of the central bank, Mr Dieng Boubou Farba, greater speed in the paper flow, more stringent follow-up, and better coordination between the various ministerial departments have already brought results. Finally, a new rescheduling of short term debt has been negotiated so as to reduce the debt service--which was running \$60 million--from 30 percent to 15 percent of exports.

Beyond the \$100 million promised by Saudi Arabia, of which half has already been poured out, Iraq undertook, in September, to advance \$20 million, including \$5 million in grant to create a national television network to free Mauritania from dependence on Senegal. The state, which was practically in bankruptcy, has 1.3 billion ouguiyas to last it until February 1980. It hopes to further improve the situation through economies in the military budget, which is officially 5 billion ouguiyas and in reality 6 or 7 billion, if hidden expenses are taken into account. Forces on active duty having grown by reason of the hostilities from 1,500 to more than 15,000 men, the government intends to demobilize some 10,000 men, but will do so in a gradual manner, to avoid violent reactions.

On the economic plane, the regime has decided to pursue the building of infrastructure useful from the national and social standpoint, but without prospect of immediate financial return, such as the Nouakchott-Nema trans-Mauritanian road, 1,093 km long. The first section, to Kifa (491 km), reduced from 10 hours to two the time it takes an auto to get from the capital to Boutilimit. Construction of the second segment, at a cost of \$110 million, was awarded by the Ould Salek team to a Brazilian company that was in competition with a French firm, which at the time provoked sharp tension with Paris. The government has also commenced to take a series of measures including several, which attack the problems in depth, whose effects will not be felt for several years. This is especially the case for agriculture and fishing.

Thus, on 10 December, Lieutenant Colonel Haidalla went to St-Louis-du-Senegal for what he called /"the rendezvous with hope."/ With Presidents Senghor and Moussa Traore he laid the cornerstones of the Diana dam, which is scheduled to be finished by 1984, completion of the Manantail dam being planned for 1986 (LE MONDE 27 December).

Fishing, the Sector of the Future

Fishing is without doubt the true sector of the future, for it can produce greater revenues than iron mining, taking account of the quality and abundance of the varieties existing off its coasts. The licensing system inherited from the old regime was disastrous and it resulted in a shameless pillage of this national treasure by the principal beneficiaries, the Soviets, the Spanish, the Japanese, and the Koreans. Thus, in 1978, while 550 licenses were issued, some 900 trawlers took 1.5 million tons, but only off-loaded 6,000 at Nouadhibou, this being 0.4 percent, all the rest being processed on board, then off-loaded at Las Palmas and sometimes at Lagos. Now the off-loading in a Mauritanian port of only 30,000 tons of cephalopods (octopus, squid, sleeve fish, etc) would bring in as much as the 1979 licenses, or 500 million ouguiyas.

Maj Moulaye Ould Boukhreiss, minister of planning and fishing, has courageously suppressed all the licensing and set forth a policy for the medium and long term. Ideally, we are told, Mauritania would have a fishing fleet--state-owned companies and mixed companies--and all products would be off-loaded under control of customs, processed, and marketed on the spot. This presumes that installations similar to those existing on the Canaries would be built at Nouadhibou. Meanwhile, until this is possible, diverse less ambitious measures are being taken here and now and already implemented.

"/"We intend to break with the policy of prestige practiced by the old regime in the industrial sector, but right now we must try to get a return on what it has left us,"/ said Mr Mohamed El Mokhtar Ould Zamel, minister of mining and industry. In reality, the war hindered the operations of the oil refinery at Nouadhibou, construction of which cost close to \$100 million, and which should produce a million tons from the Hassi-Messaoud crude, satisfying the needs of the country and enabling it to export 750,000 tons. It is the same with the sugar refinery, which has cost \$25 million, whereas the contract signed in 1972-73 fixed its costs at 9.5 million. At mid-December, Algerian and European experts met in Nouakchott to examine ways to get the two installations functioning.

The Guelb Mining Project

Along the same line, a new and ambitious project is in a fair way to realization. At a cost of \$500 million--100 million of which is to be furnished by SNIM--it hopes to exploit, starting in 1983, the Guelb iron deposits, which will take the place of the mines at Kedia d'Idjill (Zoue-rate), 25 km distant, which are near exhaustion. Transformed into a mixed company in which foreign participation (Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, and the Islamic Bank) is 29 percent, SNIM waited for 2 years for foreign financing of the project to launch it: the financing having been furnished by several different bodies, including the World Bank and the French CCCE [Central Fund for Economic Cooperation] (150 million F.)

The new mine should provide 12 million tons in 1992, the year the old one will be terminated, its production having fallen to 5 million tons because of the war and Australian and Brazilian competition but climbed back to 9 million tons in 1979. Some experts have cast doubt on the wisdom of the project at Guelb. In fact, it allows profitable use of existing infrastructure (the railroad, the port of Nouadhibou, etc), employs people (6,000 workers, including some crews trained at fifteen using illiterate workers), and gives work to young people who will go through two centers of education for which \$10 million have been allocated. In total, with its sectoral fallout, SNIM involves 100,000 people.

Linguistic Reform

Finally, a national office of geological and mineral research is going to be created and French and Japanese companies are going to prospect in the area of Bir-Mogrein, which has uranium. An oil consortium comprising Hispanoil, Agip, Esso, and Phillips should begin in February the first off-shore drilling. The minister hopes that a Mauritanian enterprise will /"soon"/ exploit the salt-pits near Nouakchott, /"in accordance with our policy of encouraging systematically the small local processing industries."/ Mr Christian Ladonne, an IMF expert, and most of the Western diplomats believe that if the recovery strategy presently being followed is maintained, Mauritania could be /"out of the woods"/ within 2 or 3 years.

These hopes are encouraged by the important linguistic reform adopted at the end of last year and which have given satisfaction to the black African community. /"The policy of cultural independence, which inspired the reform of 1973, anticipated the Arabic renaissance and the upgrading of the other national languages, such as poulaar, soninke, and wolof, but this concept was never implemented,"/ we were told by Mr Hsni Ould Didi, minister of elementary and secondary education. A decree adopted by the Council of Ministers on 7 December created an institute of national languages which will assure the promotion of these languages and their insertion into the educational system within a 6-year period.

A transitory system is going to be put gradually in place before the beginning of the 1980-81 academic year. It will consist of two channels, one Arabic, the other bilingual--in fact, French. This will all end up in the installation of four national languages (Arabic, poulaar, soninke, and wolof), it being understood that Arabic will be considered the /"unitary language"/ and that, starting in 1985-86, French will become the /"outward-looking language"/. This means that once the reform is implemented every Mauritanian will have to learn his mother tongue plus Arabic and be exposed to French. In order to guide this reform, so costly for a poor country, to success, the authorities intend to ask the cooperation of UNESCO and the ACCT [Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency].

Not unaware that it needs stability to consolidate the sought-after recovery, the prime minister has chosen the most expeditious way by substituting himself, on 4 January, for the chief of state and discarding the more doubtful leaders. In external affairs, he has asked France for aid in discouraging his neighbors from their ambitions. He has also laid before both regional and international tribunals the subject of the evacuation of Bir-Moghrine by the Moroccan contingent as a question of principle and out of fear of seeing Rabat provoke a coup by means of notables from the old regime. The demonstrations organized throughout the country to demand the evacuation of Bir-Moghrine were aimed as much to isolate pro-Moroccan elements as to stimulate that national feeling which enabled Mauritania to assert itself after its accession to independence, and which today is strong enough to guarantee its survival in spite of its considerable problems.

9516
CSO: 4400

MAURITANIA

EEC DELEGATION VISITS, PROVIDES GRANTS

Nouakchott CHAAB in French 21 Dec 79 pp 1,8

[Joint communique on the visit of the EEC delegation, led by Klaus Meyer, director general for development, issued in Nouakchott on 20 December 1979]

[Text] Klaus Meyer, EEC director general for development, left the capital yesterday for Dakar at the conclusion of a 2-day visit to our country.

During this visit, Klaus Meyer, who had talks with several senior officials, informed the Mauritanian authorities that the EEC is making available to Mauritania a total of 2.9 billion Mauritanian ouguiya [MU] in the form of subsidies. He also affirmed that our country can appeal to the Community in the event of catastrophe.

The EEC official was received yesterday by Lt Col Ahmed Salem Ould Sidi, second vice president of the CMSN [Military Committee for National Safety], minister in charge of the CMSN, which is responsible for handling current business during the absence of the head of state.

Klaus Meyer and the delegation accompanying him also talked yesterday morning with a Mauritanian delegation led by Maj Moulaye O. Boukhreiss, member of the CMSN, minister of planning and fishery.

Shortly after his departure, Klaus Meyer and Maj Moulaye O. Boukhreiss signed the joint communique sanctioning the proceedings of the two parties.

The following communique was also published:

"A delegation from the European Economic Community, led by Mr Klaus Meyer, director general for development, and including representatives of the European Development Bank, visited the Islamic Republic of Mauritania from 19 to 20 December 1979.

"Mr Klaus, accompanied by Mr J. Silvain, deputy director of the European Investment Bank, were [as published] received by His Excellency Lt Col Ahmed Salem Ould Sidi, second vice president of the Military Committee for National Safety. During this visit, his excellency the vice president of

the CMSN stressed the importance of the cooperation which has developed between Mauritania and the EEC since the first European Development Fund (EDF).

"Mr Klaus Meyer indicated that Mauritania was among the very first countries visited by a delegation from the Community since the signing of the second Lome Convention (which occurred barely 2 weeks ago) to establish, with the government, the cooperation program to be realized over the next 5 years.

"Mr Klaus Meyer and Mr Silvain also talked with Ahmed Ould Zein, minister of finances and trade and interim minister of foreign affairs and cooperation.

"The Community delegation met with a Mauritanian delegation led by Maj Moulaye Ould Boukreiss, minister of planning and fishery. The talks, taking place in an atmosphere of mutual confidence and friendship, made it possible to establish the program of Community aid to Mauritania for the next 5 years. The Community delegation informed the government that a maximum sum of 2.9 billion Mauritanian ouguiya can be made available to Mauritania, mainly in the form of subsidies, to finance the nation's development projects. In addition, the representative of the European Investment Bank indicated that the bank noted the government's intention of submitting projects to it, in particular in the sector of mines and the industrial processing of fishery products.

"Among others, an action for the promotion of the Nouakchott Wharf was identified as a project to be financed under the fifth EDF.

"He also mentioned that on the basis of the second Lome Convention, Mauritania could still benefit from the STABEX system, including for iron ore, which will still be under this system for the first 5 financial years covered by the new convention.

"Mauritania will still obviously be able to appeal for emergency assistance in the event of catastrophe.

"Lastly, the Community will continue, if need be, to provide Mauritania with food assistance, which will enable it to meet food shortages such as the one which is unfortunately to be recorded for the 1979-80 campaign.

"The two delegations proceeded to an exchange of views on the regional cooperation to be implemented within the framework of the second Lome Convention. The Community delegation informed the Mauritanian Government that a sum of between 7.5 billion MU and 9.5 billion MU could be earmarked for the financing of regional projects in west Africa, of which Mauritania could also be a beneficiary.

"At the conclusion of the thorough discussions which took place between the two delegations, the program regarding Community aid was signed, on behalf of the Mauritania Government by the minister of planning and fishery, Maj Moulaye Ould Boukreiss, and for the European Economic Community by Mr Klaus Meyer, EEC director general for development, and for the annex concerning the EDF by Mr Silvain."

Finally, let us note that his excellency the delegate of the European Communities [as published] in Nouakchott, Mr Dietrich Collofong, gave a splendid reception last evening in the gardens of his residence, in honor of Mr Klaus Meyer, EEC director general of development, and of the members of the planning mission of the fifth EDF which has been visiting our country. Attending this reception were Maj Moulaye Ould Boukhreiss, member of the CMSN, minister of planning and fishery, Maj Thiam el-Hadj, member of the CMSN, minister for youth, sports, crafts, and tourism, several high ranking Mauritanian officials and members of the diplomatic corps accredited at Nouakchott.

12149
CSO: 4400

USFP POLITICAL BUREAU DENOUNCES SOVIET INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN

Casablanca AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 8 Jan 80 p 1

[Text] The Political Bureau of the Socialist Union of People's Forces has issued the following communique on the current situation in Afghanistan:

On the basis of its adherence to the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of others and in keeping with the principles of nonalignment, the Political Bureau of the Socialist Union finds itself compelled to make known its strong criticism of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan whatever the justifications may have been.

The gravity of the current international situation, of which all are becoming aware, has begun seriously to threaten world peace, thus creating an increasingly critical atmosphere of tension which the imperialists and colonialists will undoubtedly strive to exploit in order to impose on the peoples of the Third World, by force or by other means, the policy of expansion and hegemony.

The Socialist Union which is expressing its deep concern about the gravity of the current international situation which is threatening world peace and peaceful coexistence affirms its determination to live up to the principles of nonalignment and its strong criticism of those who are using the present sad situation as a pretext for abandoning these principles and falling under imperialistic subjection and other kinds of foreign hegemony.

Furthermore, the Socialist Union of People's Forces believes that it is its duty to draw to the attention of genuine liberation movements in the Arab and Islamic worlds the fact that the Soviet Union, in spite of all, continues to be the greatest supporter of our struggle for liberation and, in a special way, of our struggle against Zionism and for the victory of our sacred cause, the cause of the valiant Palestinian people.

The Political Bureau of the Socialist Union
Rabat, 7 January 1980

CSO: 4402

MOROCCO

GOVERNMENT ATTACK ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL POLICY

Casablanca LIBERATION in French 11-17 Jan 80 p 2

[Editorial: "What Is That Social Policy You, the Men in Charge, Are so Proud of?"]

[Text] In the guise of New Year's wishes, the government has just decided to raise petroleum product prices. At the risk of contradicting itself, it did not hesitate to make a decision like this just a few days after the end of the first parliamentary session. However, throughout the entire debate on the finance law, the finance minister ~~utdid~~ himself in promising that the crisis was just about to be resolved. Moreover, he did not even tone his proposals down. For him, the crisis was a vision of the spirit. But these increases were provided for in the finance bill, somebody might say to us in reply! Undoubtedly! And this is precisely why, among other things, the Ittihadia (USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces]) opposition, the parliamentary group of the USFP, voted against the proposal and urged the assembly to reject it. The 1980 budget, which approves the last year of the three-year plan, could only begin with a price rise. The first price rise therefore involved petroleum products. Others will follow. And this is all the more disquieting since the administration of Master Maati Bouabid does not give the impression that it cares too much about that.

It was said above all that this crisis is due to a difficult international situation. But why stop at that? Although, at most, one might agree with the persons responsible for this explanation, we do wonder about the effectiveness of the policy being pursued to accommodate this extreme sensitivity of Morocco's economy to international difficulties and to changes in the world economy. Besides, the countries which keep mentioning the international economic situation to justify their economic and social troubles are trying to work out and implement guidelines which would protect their economy from the repercussions of such a situation. Everywhere we can see, if not resolute national decisions, then at least a desire to reduce the impact of the upheavals on the international markets. In Morocco, there has not been any major effort made against the dangers of total vulnerability to international tendencies, not has there been any desire to end this dependence on the "foreign crisis."

And here is the result: people care little about justifying a price rise, such as the one on petroleum products. The price on each barrel of crude went up, the masses were told in reply, and that was that. Only, the masses do know that, while the government has replenished its sources of financing by steps other than through the tremendous increase in indirect taxes, the repercussions of the barrel price rise did not equally touch the well-off and the disadvantaged.

Now, nobody is unaware of the fact that these measures will not stop at that. The recent decision made by the administration will only start a flood of price rises. What will spring from the rise in petroleum product prices, as usual, is in effect a flareup of all basic consumer products costs, including food products, transportation, basic manufactured items, etc. In other words, the price rises which we had last summer in sugar, oil, and flour will not be the last of the troubles encountered by the popular masses. The year 1979 ended with an inflation rate 20 percent; the year 1980 will bring a continuing advance in the cost of living. This year's budget law has the merit of notifying us of this terrible deterioration awaiting the purchasing power of the middle classes and the disadvantaged. This pauperization is in full swing and will get worse to the point of pushing more and more segments of the population below the minimum threshold of a decent living. Food expenses, which during the sixties took almost 70 percent of the wages, showed a decline in recent years. Not that the masses fully met their needs and moved on to a more advanced consumer stage but rather because the crushing expenditures, such as housing, nibbled away at their food purchasing power. Today, thus, with this administration policy, the masses will continue to be mostly poorly fed and mostly poorly housed.

This is pauperization in the extreme. Morocco has become a society of poor people! An infinite minority will continue to disregard what it means to be a Moroccan in 1980. The feast and ostentatious expenses will continue among the well-off circles because the budget bill gives them presence in the form of tax benefits.

But to whom should we then address the cry of alarm raised today by 60 percent of the Moroccans in order to be heard? The administration of Master Maati Bouabid has the most complete reports and documents on the disastrous condition of 18 million citizens deprived of minimum conditions of human subsistence! How can these responsible officials afford to overlook the fact that the very least they can do is to compensate the workers for their loss of purchasing power due to monetary erosion? What is this social policy which you, the gentlemen responsible for it for the past 3 years, are so proud of? Even when you announce wage hikes as ridiculous as those of last May, this is done only in order to get the money back double and triple and even more. The situation is untenable! It is just as preoccupying as the light-hearted approach with which the 1980 budget was presented and adopted. And nothing is more serious than an attitude as arrogant as the one of the administration when it claims that the

crisis in Morocco is not a structural one. But, as the popular saying goes, "the weight of a burden is felt only by the one who carries it."

5058
CSO:4400

TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES UNDER ATTACK

Casablanca LIBERATION in French 11-17 Jan 80 p 4

[Article by Mohamed Azzayani: "The Strategy of the Moroccan Phosphate Empire"]

[Text] With the end of colonization, Morocco lost a name which was particularly pleasing to certain colonial circles. Everybody believed that the Moroccan Empire was a name that had become a museum piece. There was therefore no delay in discovering that name in its new refuge on the last mine quarry, one of the old bastions of colonial times, in other words, the Moroccan Phosphates Office. The Office today is not only a state within a state but it is really "the Moroccan Phosphate Empire" to the extent where it has become the symbol of colonial continuity in Morocco.

Let us take a closer look at it: a huge room done in glass and fancy upholstery, a well-cushioned environment, a kind of newly-rich decor, full of gadgets, and entirely given over to the seduction exerted by furniture merchants and interior decorators. We are as a matter of fact in the building housing the board of directors. It is a monument of culture, such as it was designed, in its aseptic and functional style: the very latest in "modern design." This place has a particularly strong attraction because it is the very image of "success"; it stands by itself so that everyone can see it well; it is somewhat out of the way so that it will not be feared; it is hermetic so that the noises of the city cannot be heard inside.

On that day, the "noble one" was surrounded by the members of the board of directors; just routine business: the strikes, which have been going on for several days, were spreading and getting stronger. The workers of the ECP [Moroccan Phosphate Empire] were fighting to defend the rights they had gained and to protect the improvement of their living conditions. The "collector's offices" stopped working, one after the other, in view of the stubbornness of "the emperor." But he remained imperturbable, like a rock; he did not wish to move from his usual position: no dialogue this is a test of strength and all we have to do is for the strikes to die down.

Some of the board of directors were not convinced as to the attitude of the plant managers and imperceptibly allowed their skepticism to shine through. In an effort to get them to stop hesitating, he launched into a practical demonstration. Political analysis of the situation, situation estimate on the balance of power, on relations between the party and the labor unions; in summary, a big play to demonstrate his qualities as "strategist" in business and in "empire" management. Then he slipped in his conclusion with rare elegance: "Let the dogs continue to bark," he said peremptorily. But he did not finish the popular saying which goes "and the Caravan will pass" because it does not sound modern to talk about nomads in this stronghold of technocracy.

The members of the board of directors gathered up their papers; once again, the demands of the workers had not been heard. Some members of the board of directors felt that their boss' obstinacy concealed a flaw: his inability to discern, as a man and as an official responsible for the life of a public enterprise, the limits of his prerogatives. Is this a case of being rough on the labor unions out of colonial tradition or is it due to bad feelings against the minister who received the labor unions and promised to get discussions started?

Doubts are not permitted here although the "emperor's" irritation with the initiatives taken by the minister is not to be neglected. The "strategist" of the empire as a matter of fact wants to wipe out all union activities. He could, if necessary, come to terms with a fiction but not with a labor union headquarters which operate with unanimity among the workers to back it up. This is a counterpower whose existence he does not allow and whose manifestations he does not tolerate.

To achieve that goal, another strategy is needed, the strategy of division. By first of all creating the castes and trying to develop a sovereign disdain for the rights of the workers among the engineers and managing personnel. But while he may have found some people ready to go along with that, the majority of the personnel was aware of the injustice of the management toward the fair claims of the workers and the irresponsibility of the boss who, during a period of crisis, further aggravated social conflicts and caused the loss of thousands of production days to satisfy an immoderate taste for absolute power. The strange thing in the entire affair is that the man who represents the ECP as a model enterprise in talking to foreigners forgets that much more powerful enterprises, in Europe and the United States, their adopted countries, are also having strikes and discussions with the labor unions and resolution of conflicts. But our strategist here wants to achieve a synthesis between "tradition" and modern times. This is just like in this big building where the marriage between the palm tree, which provides local color, and the carefully manicured lawn represents the continuity between the colonial system and phony liberalism. Everybody is aware of this truth, even the aristocratic and carefully manicured lawn imported at such great expense which

refuses to sprout on this mixed soil--even though it may have been improved with sod imported from Holland, likewise at great expense--where some of the flowers of colonization are supposed to be made to blossom again.

5058

CSO:4400

QATAR

BRIEFS

ISLAMIC, JERUSALEM FUND CONTRIBUTIONS--Doha, 30 Jan--The Qatari cabinet has decided to contribute \$1 million to the Islamic Solidarity Fund and another \$1 million to the Jerusalem Fund. The cabinet held its weekly session today under Shaykh Khalifah Ibn Hamad al Thani, the amir of Qatar, at which it reviewed the Qatari delegation's report on the second regional conference on population and development in the countries of West Asia, which was held in Damascus last December. The cabinet decided to set up a special committee to study efforts to coordinate the use of radio frequencies in Qatar and to follow up the results of the telecommunications conference. [Excerpts] [NC301125 Doha QNA in Arabic 1040 GMT 30 Jan 80 NC]

CSO: 4802

DEVELOPMENT FINANCING IN NATION EXPLORED

Muscat 'UMAN in Arabic 25 Dec 79 p 2

/Article: "A Talk with a Financier and Economist on Development and the Development Bank"/

/Text/ The bank is performing an important, vital role in serving the domestic economy, through the facilities it offers and the productive economic projects to which it contributes, as well as the diverse transfer activities it performs for various branches of economic activity.

The world has witnessed a perceptible transformation in the function of banks in the last half of this century. The world's trend has been toward specialization, which is a prominent characteristic of this era.

Just as specialization has dominated the various branches of technical and technological activity, so has it dominated the branches of human and economic activity.

Thus specialized banks have also emerged to carry out specific, defined functions. Just as there are commercial banks, so are there banks for agricultural credit; just as there are housing banks, so are there banks whose task is to support and back development activities.

Today's meeting is with Mr Muhammad Bashir ibn 'Uthman, director general of the Oman Development Bank, a bank which is contributing effectively to one important aspect of the economic development plans in our country. This bank deals with private sector projects and competently performs a most important influential role in the development of our national economy.

At the start of the meeting I told him, "Perhaps it would be most fitting at the start of this meeting if you offered us a concise idea of the Development Bank."

/Answer/ . . . us go back, therefore, to 1974. At that time efforts were being made to move the course of development in the country forward so that it would derive the strength to take off. The government decided to

establish a bank to support the development process and offer loans to the private sector to enable it to contribute effectively to the development plans. Thus the Oman Development Bank came into existence. Its strategic objective has been to take part in building the structure for development and supporting and financing private sector projects.

Question / Is the private sector contributing a large portion of the bank's capital?

Answer / The private sector contributes 8 percent of the bank's capital while the government contributes 52 percent. The remaining 40 percent represents the shares of a group of Arab and foreign banks and financing funds.

Question / It is certain that these convictions arise from confidence in the wise policy the government of His Majesty Sultan Qabus is following and from the stability of the economic situation in the country.

Also, the International Financing Organization of the World Bank is contributing a substantial portion of capital and is also participating in the administration of the bank by offering us technical and administrative advice when the projects the bank finances are discussed. Also, the bank's board of directors includes among its members one member of this international institution.

Question / Does the bank have joint relations or projects with other international banks?

Answer / Naturally. As you know, one of the most important goals for which the bank was founded was to provide loans for various private sector projects. At the same time, it can insure its clients by obtaining loans from other international banks. For example, in 1977 the bank made positive contacts with foreign organizations to finance exports; the basic goal was for the bank to create a number of facilities for our customers. If someone who deals with the bank wants to buy raw materials from a European country, that will be as a result of our contacts and the facilities we have obtained, and the foreign bank will not demand much interest.

Question / We would like you to shed some light on the Oman Development Bank's participation in Omani private sector projects for us.

Answer / Since the bank was established, we have financed 10 industrial projects. These are represented by:

Fishing net manufacturing projects.

Tannery projects.

Poultry raising projects.

Plastic bag manufacturing projects.

Natural gas projects.

The value of these projects comes to about 1.5 million Omani riyals. We are now making an economic feasibility study on 12 new industrial projects, and it is expected that a decision will be issued to agree to financing for them in the next 2 months. These new projects represent a number of industries, such as ice, aluminum doors and windows, gas product processing and furniture. The total funds to be allocated to financing the projects in 1980 will come to 5 million Omani riyals.

Question/ What lending policy is the bank pursuing now?

Answer/ The lending policy we pursue arises from a basis of encouragement of industry. It is the policy which his majesty's government supports, and the government is constantly striving to support economic activity in its various sectors.

Since the bank's basic goal is to offer financial and technical support to licensed Omani companies which perform their obligations through these productive sectors, the support offered to these sectors comes to a maximum of 60 percent of the value of project costs, provided that the loan is repaid within a period not to exceed 8 years. In exchange, the bank obtains interest of 8 percent on these loans but the project does not pay that whole rate- rather, it bears just 5 percent while the government bears 8 percent as part of its contribution to the development of these sectors.

Question/ When you examine the condition of a productive project for financing, what considerations are taken into account to evaluate the acceptability or unfeasibility of financing it?

Answer/ At the start, the project must be licensed by the competent authorities, the project's feasibility study must establish its importance to the domestic economy, and the project must possess good management in various fields, in technical and technological fields or in the marketing field. In addition, studies bearing on the project must establish its ability to obtain a surplus profit through which it will be possible for the project to endure and pay off the loans and interest on the loans, as well as providing a return to the project owner and society as well.

Question/ Does the bank's role as far as the project goes end with a study of these aspects and with the offer of loans, or does it continue throughout the life of the project itself?

Answer/ When the bank finances a project, it is not content to offer loans; rather, its role extends to supervision of the steps of implementation and it also participates by providing technical and marketing advice

and contributes to project management in solving any problems standing in the way of the project, whatever they may be.

/Question/ There is no doubt that the profit element is important when the decision to finance a project is made, as you have already stated. However, it is also certain that it is not the only element you bear in mind when providing a loan is studied. For example, do you study the requirements of the Omani market for the commodity this project produces?

/Answer/ As I have stated previously, the basic objective is to support the Omani economy by establishing economic projects in specific fields, in order to expand the productive base of the country in a way that will guarantee that the requirements of the Omani market are covered and will work to reduce imports and broaden exports, as a part of the process of stimulating the balance of trade and trade relations with international markets.

/Question/ Are the bank's services restricted to projects carried out within the area of the capital or does the bank also try to spread its services about to include all portions of the sultanate? How does the bank make contacts with citizens outside the area of the capital?

/Answer/ It is certain that the bank's contacts with citizens anywhere in the sultanate are not obstructed by any obstacles; means of communication are available and easy, and the entire sultanate is linked up by communications lines and roads of the highest caliber. We move around in the form of committees to numerous worksites spread out over the entire area of the country.

The bank is always trying to spread its services among all citizens so that the greatest possible number may benefit from the services the bank provides. At the same time, the bank is anxious that the projects it agrees to finance be diversified so that they may satisfy the requirements of the Omani market as a whole. On the same level as attention to project diversification, we are also concerned to have these projects spread out over the whole area of the sultanate. This is part of the bank's policy which aims at spreading its services.

When the project is being studied, here in the bank we show concern for the project's proximity to sources of raw materials or marketing sites.

As I have said, the bank travels about to sites of work and production. A committee drawn up by the bank has made a visit to the Southern Region. During this visit it conducted a comprehensive survey to ascertain the requirements of the region and the market there, the extent to which the bank could contribute to the projects to be established there, and the projects which were suitable to begin financing.

Another committee made a similar visit to the Desert Province and areas surrounding it for the same purpose.

Thus you can see that we are always anxious to have the bank's services extend to encompass all areas of the sultanate.

Question / Is the bank's role restricted to the financing of new projects or does it extend to projects which were in existence before the bank was founded?

Answer / Committees are derived from the bank which include experts in economics and marketing. These committees make periodic visits to various areas of the sultanate and the committees study projects which were in existence prior to the establishment of the bank in the course of these visits and offer technical advice to develop them, increase the volume of their activities, introduce new expansions into them or substitute more advanced machinery.

The bank always tries to develop new and existing projects and support these projects so that they may be able to offer more and so that the productive base of the country may be expanded.

Question / How large a response has the bank sensed on the citizens' part?

Answer / The bank receives many applications, and these show a response and an understanding of the role of the bank. The bank follows a policy of going out among the citizens; we here are not content to wait for people with projects to come to us while we are in our offices--we go to them and explain our ideas and goals to them. We offer them our suggestions and pave the way for them to cooperate with the bank in order to develop their project. The comprehensive survey the bank performs to study projects throughout the country is an inseparable part of the bank's policy of realizing direct contact with citizens and people who have projects.

The bank moves within a framework of government policy set forth by His Majesty King Qabus to uplift Oman and develop the country's national income sources.

The bank's doors are open to everyone who has a serious project and everyone with an investment idea which will bring benefit to the country. We welcome all sincere initiatives to establish productive projects, and we are ready to study them and transform them.

Question / In the past years of life of the blessed course /of the nation/, the people of Oman have been able to realize noticeable progress in the fields of education and the acquisition of expertise. To what extent has the bank benefited from specialized Omani personnel in studying projects or in the various activities of the bank?

Answer / The bank's employment policy is to give priority to Omanis, with open employment opportunities for capable Omanis who are able to operate banking, marketing and commercial activities.

We are proud that the bank's family includes capable Omanis who play an important role in the activities of the bank. We now have an Omani economist who possesses a high, excellent capability, combining practical experience with a scientific university background. We have an Omani economist who has graduated from the Faculty of Business Management and has good ability in running banking activities.

Among the Omani personnel in the bank there are also Omani engineers who take part in studying the technical aspects of projects.

In the administrative and clerical area, all employees are Omanis, from the administrative manager and to the clerical activities.

The Oman Development Bank is also anxious to be in direct contact by virtue of the fact that the bank finances some fellowships for specialized study abroad, on the condition that the student undertake to work in the bank upon graduation.

What I have mentioned are just examples which show how anxious the bank is to use Omani personnel and capabilities.

Question/ Since you are an economist and administrator, what are your impressions, from your expertise, experience and personal contact with the economic situation in Oman, of the course of development in our country?

Answer/ The course of development in Oman, whose banner is led by His Majesty Sultan Qabus, is to be truly considered a model of serious effective action to develop this society.

Economic policy in the country is based on development plans linked to a schedule. I have personally experienced the steps of Omani economic advancement and implementation of the economic development plan, and it is clear that what is being achieved is to be considered the greatest proof of the strength of the Omani economy, the soundness and accuracy of planning, and the officials' zeal to build a strong economic base with diversified sources and revenues.

Question/ During our conversation I have noticed that you emphasize studies of the marketing and marketing services elements of projects. This emphasis may prompt me to ask you your opinion about the Omani market.

Answer/ The Omani market is experiencing a new resurgence. In times past, this market had contacts and influence in the region. Today, thanks to wise, upright economic policy, I consider that the Omani market will regain its status.

By my close contact with Omani businessmen, I can say that they are persons who possess wisdom, experience and precision and there is no doubt that

the Omani businessmen inherit this experience and wisdom from their ancient history.

I expect that the Omani market will be experiencing great prosperity in the next few years.

11887

CSO: 4802

SULTANATE OF OMAN

GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR GREATER ARAB INTEGRATION CITED

Muscat AL-WATAN in Arabic 31 Dec 79 p 3

/Article by 'Amir 'Ali Muhammad al-Hajri: "A New Framework for Economic Cooperation and Integration among Arab and Gulf Countries"/

/Text/ Since trade and industry are two major elements in our country's economic life, and since the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman is a basic component of this element, we had a meeting with MrAhmad ibn 'Umayr, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman. We discussed the circumstances of the beginning, the concerns of the present and the aspirations of the future.

I asked Mr Ahmad ibn 'Umayr,

"In your capacity as vice president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman, we would like you to give us an idea about this chamber and when the idea of establishing it arose."

/Answer/ Naturally the blessed corrective revolution in July 1970 and its urgent efforts to establish a modern state in every sense set forth the bases and legislation regulating the establishment of the requisite agencies for it.

Since bygone times the Sultanate of Oman was a maritime state with active commerce which extended to the coasts of Africa and the countries of Asia up to China, the new government devoted itself to reviving this reputation and activity within the framework of developing beloved Oman to regain its status among the nations in this and other fields.

Oman has had to keep abreast of the progress which countries more advanced than it had gone through and compensate for what it had missed in the field of trade and trade regulation. At that time numerous ideas came to the forefront in which the august leader of the country and those men he had chosen to accompany him and to whom he entrusted responsibility in many spheres participated.

One of these men was His Excellency Muhammad al-Zubayr, now the minister of commerce and industry, who met with the few other businessmen in the sultanate at that time. They gave thought to establishing a chamber of commerce and industry and establishing a body which could bring commerce and businessmen together. A charter committee was formed for this purpose in 1973 and presented draft general bylaws for the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Sultanate of Oman which were put into final form and issued by a decree of the sultan on 15 May 1973. The charter committee proceeded to establish the framework of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman and its preliminary agencies and then established a board of directors to which it transferred the mission all its member merchants and businessmen had entrusted to it. This board was then elected in early 1975.

/Question/ What are the goals to which the chamber strives?

/Answer/ The goals the chamber has striven and is striving to achieve are:

First, to establish competent agencies within the chamber to serve organic sectors in the domestic and international contexts, coordinates with domestic authorities to express their requirements, participate in matters touching on the economic interests of members, and advance their affairs.

Second, to cooperate in establishing and broadening commercial relations among businessmen and their counterparts in the foreign community.

Third, to participate in meetings and activities which affect the interests of commerce and industry in the Arab Gulf and international contexts.

/Question/ How many members are there in the chamber and how can one become a member in it?

/Answer/ The number of members in the chamber now is close to 10,000. The way for an applicant to enroll in the chamber is to present his application accompanied by certified papers as specified in the chamber's bylaws. The executive office of the chamber studies the application and discusses it within 2 weeks of the date of its submission in order to satisfy legal and organizational conditions. In case the application is turned down, the applicant may refer it to the board of directors, which must review the matter within 1 month.

Here one must point out that it is binding on everyone who engages in commercial activities, be he a citizen or a foreigner, a natural or corporate person, to belong to the chamber of commerce and industry in whose jurisdiction his main activity is situated, until other chambers are established, this is specified as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman, which is the only chamber now existing in the sultanate.

To belong, it is conditional that:

1. The person have entered his name in the Commercial or Industrial Register of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry according to the nature of his activity.
2. The person pay annual registration and membership dues according to his capital category.

/Question/ What are the minimum dues?

/Answer/ The minimum dues are 15 Omani riyals per year, although 8 additional riyals are paid upon enrollment for the first time as a fee for registration and acquisition of a registration certificate as chamber member. This expense is non-recurring.

/Question/ What benefits can an annual member obtain?

/Answer/ The benefits are numerous:

- A. Certification of certificates issued by the member in the field of business and his commercial relations with others domestically or abroad, giving them an official character.
- B. Providing information on commercial references and directories on import sources in various countries of the world so that one may obtain beneficial data and sources for transactions.
- C. Introducing the member to the commercial and industrial society in this capacity has the result of exchanging the aid and facilities he requires in his visits abroad. That is a general agreement among chambers.
- D. Benefiting from the data and publications the chamber issues, such as its quarterly magazine.
- E. Listing the member's name under his category of specialization in a commercial guide issued by the chamber and distributed throughout the world to chambers of commerce and trade agencies; this results in opening the doors to contact with the member by organizations abroad.
- F. Access to the chamber's agencies to obtain advice and guidance concerning difficulties or problems to which the member is exposed in his activities. We have statistics on the service the chamber has provided for members to this end; once again, we proclaim, as we have in the past, that the chamber is the merchants' home and is always available to them to obtain services and other matters any time they like.

/Question/ Are there booklets in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to acquaint the merchant or member with the goals and objectives of the chamber?

/Answer/ Yes, from the general bylaws of the chamber issued by a decree of the sultan in May 1973, through the chamber's annual report, which is presented to the General Assembly at the beginning of every year.

/Question/ If any commercial problem arises for any member, can the chamber solve his problem or provide the aid he needs?

/Answer/ Yes, the chamber studies it and adopts it, although it is up to the merchant to present his problem without delay, as soon as it arises, lest he lose the support which may guarantee that the chamber's intervention is a success.

There is also the stipulation that the problem be a humanitarian one which clearly shows that the Omani is in the right and that sound commercial procedure has been followed in the pursuit of commercial relations with others.

/Question/ Does cooperation and coordination exist between the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman and chambers of commerce in other countries?

/Answer/ Yes. With them we receive the documents, data and publications in which the reference library of the chamber abounds. In addition, they make visits to the sultanate in the form of commercial and industrial delegations and establish contact with the society in Oman.

Here we would also point out that on the Arab-wide level the chamber has taken part in the General Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Arab Countries as a founding member and the same is the case with the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and a new federation known as the /chamber of/ Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in the Arab Gulf Countries.

In addition to this, the Omani Chamber is a member of joint Arab-foreign chambers with many friendly countries.

/Question/ I was given an opportunity to read the first issue of the chamber's magazine. Will this magazine be available to merchants and members on a permanent basis and is there a regular commercial guide which one can obtain or subscribe to?

/Answer/ Yes, the magazine is now being issued every 3 months and we are looking into issuing it monthly. As far as the commercial guide goes, we have issued a copy which lists our members' names in English with the goal of informing the society abroad, and we are in the process of issuing a new number. The per-copy price of the current issue is 5 Oman riyals and one may obtain it from the chamber or the publisher, which is MAJALLAT AL-USRAH.

/Question/ What are the future plans of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry? Does the chamber intend to open branches in some areas of the sultanate?

/Answer/ The chamber is in the process of expanding its activities and constructing a building necessary for its meetings which will be a good reflection on the chamber and our society domestically and abroad. Consultant studies are now being made to establish a seven-story building in the Oberoy Plaza area.

A two-story building will also be received soon to house chamber employees.

The chamber has established specialized committees derived from its board to devote attention to members' affairs. The chamber's areas of specialization are:

- A. The legislation and arbitration committee.
- B. The information committee.
- C. The economic project development and followup committee.
- D. The financial and administrative affairs committee. This will be assumed by the chamber's executive office.

Concerning branches, the chamber has one in the Southern Region, in Salalah, and similar branches will be established whenever economic features develop in a way to justify establishment of such branches to serve members.

/Question/ What are your hopes for the future?

/Answer/ I hope to see Oman cover strides in its commercial and industrial growth, its land and valleys become green with agriculture which will bring forth abundant crops, its commerce and transactions revived, and its people blessed with a high level of life and welfare which will beautify and distinguish their place in the world.

/Question/ The chamber has taken part in the chambers of commerce meetings in the Gulf which were recently held in Kuwait. What was discussed in the meeting?

/Answer/ At the Kuwait meeting, the establishment of a federation of chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture in the Arab Gulf countries was announced and the charter of the federation was approved, setting out the framework for cooperation and integration among Arab Gulf countries. This will appear in detail in the law which will be published in the magazine issue now being printed.

11887
CSO: 4802

SULTANATE OF OMAN

FORTHCOMING NATIONAL BUDGET SUMMARIZED

Muscat 'UMAN in Arabic 8 Jan 80 pp 1, 8

/Article by Hammud al-Siyabi: "Director of Budget Department in General Financial Directorate: 7.5 Percent Increase in the Sections of the New Budget"/

/Text/ Hammud Hilal al-Habsi, director of the Budget Department of the General Financial Directorate, has declared that the sultanate's financial base is strong and that the recent decision to raise oil prices has added to the strength of the situation.

He said, in a special statement to 'UMAN, that the draft budget for this year will be presented to the Financial Affairs Council in the middle of this month preparatory to its approval.

He added that the budget consists of a 7.5 percent increase in all sections this year.

To a question on whether this year's budget contains proposed housing and transportation allowances, he replied that housing allowances would be added automatically to the budget as soon as they are approved.

To a question whether these have yet been authorized, he said,

"Information at my disposal is that the Council of Ministers has finished discussing the matter and is in the process of authorization. A decree will be issued on this by the secretary of the Council of Ministers."

He went on to state, "This allowance reflects the concern of the government of His Majesty Sultan Qabus to create the best system of welfare for employees so that it may provide valuable rewards for all employees at various levels, whether they benefit from them through Housing Bank loans or possess government housing."

On the question of whether the decision to approve the allowances will affect the country's economic situation, he said, "The approval decision will

not have any effect since we will abrogate the contracts for the rent we had been paying out for rented houses and we will have the employees benefiting from the Housing Bank loans defray the interest on these loans."

An additional section will be passed in regard to Grade Four class employees and below, to whom housing allowances will be disbursed for the first time.

Hammud al-Habsi concluded his talk by stating that the interests of all citizens of various classes and grades have been taken into consideration in housing allowances.

Transportation allowances are still under discussion and to talk about their details would be premature.

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CSO: 4802

DHOPAR ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER OPENED

Muscat AL-WATAN in Arabic 7 Jan 80 p 2

/Article: "Under the Supervision of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar: Inauguration of the Administrative Center in Tawi 'Asir"/

/Text/ The day before yesterday the inauguration of the administrative center in the Southern Region hills was celebrated under the supervision of His Excellency Mr Hilal ibn Sa'ud ibn Harib, minister of state and governor of Dhofar. Attending the celebration were Mr Khuzaym al-Khuzaym, second secretary of the embassy of the fraternal state of Kuwait, senior government officials, sheikhs, notables and a large assembly of citizens. The celebration began with the recitation of verses from the holy Koran. Then his excellency the minister of state and governor of Dhofar graciously gave a talk on this occasion in which he emphasized the importance of the inauguration of this center, which stands as a witness and living proof of the extent of the development and construction which the Southern Region is experiencing in this prosperous era. He added that the inauguration of this center is to be considered a splendid achievement, since it will be participating with other areas spread out through all parts of the Southern Region in offering and providing services in all fields, such as education, health, local development, religious guidance, potable water supply, social and agricultural orientation services, and the like, with the goal of providing welfare for the citizens.

His excellency then gave thanks to the fraternal state of Kuwait, which contributed to the construction of this center, as an expression of the deep bonds of brotherhood and enduring cooperation between the two countries. After that, His Excellency Mr Hilal ibn Sa'ud ibn Harib cut the ribbon signalling the opening of the center. He and the guests then made an inspection tour of the center's various facilities.

It is worth mentioning that the center comprises a number of offices belonging to the governor's office; these include the various government departments in the Southern Region and are the link between these departments and the capital. Their aim is to facilitate and guarantee the provision of services in a complete, organized fashion. The center also includes a medical clinic, school, mosque and retail market and in addition is furnished with electric generators and big water tanks.

SULTANATE OF OMAN

BRIEFS

NATIONAL FISHING COMPANY--An official Ministry of Agriculture and Fish source stated that a contract has been signed to establish the National Omani Fish Company. The paid-up capital comes to 851,000 Omani riyals out of a total of 1 million Omani riyals, broken down as follows: 20 percent for the government, 20 percent for small fishermen, and 20 percent for the private sector. The opening of general subscription will be announced at a later date following completion of legal registration steps. In view of its fish resource areas, his majesty's government is giving great attention to the company importance in exploiting in view of the fact that it is a major important company in the country and a vital pillar contributing to supporting and developing the Omani economy. To this end, the government has provided this company with all resources, facilities, equipment, machinery and buildings with the objective of enabling the company to succeed and realize its objectives. This company's goals are embodied in the production, fishing, purchasing, transportation, storage, processing and marketing of fish and other marine life, as well as helping small Omani fishermen buy and market their fish. /Text/ /Muscat AL-WATAN in Arabic 31 Dec 79 p 2/

ANTI-MALARIA CAMPAIGN--In the context of the effort to provide a better healthy living for the citizens, the project to develop local communities of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has embarked on an anti-malaria campaign in about 17 villages in the Provinces of Nazwa and Abra' with the cooperation of the Preventive Medicine Department of the Ministry of Health. The people working on this campaign, most of whom are social and public health guides, in addition to public health teams belonging to the public health communities in the two provinces, began their work last Tuesday. The campaign has concentrated on holding symposiums and presenting films, all stressing public health and means of combatting malaria. These teams have also distributed preventive medicines, filled swamps and sprayed ponds in the villages of the two provinces. It should be pointed out that this campaign will take 2 weeks. /Text/ /Muscat AL-WATAN in Arabic 31 Dec 79 p 2/

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CSO: 4802

ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM EXPLORED, ANALYZED

Tunis DIALOGUE in French 17 Dec 79 pp 26-31

[Editorial by Hammadi Ben Hammed: "Fundamentalism: The Real Movers"]

[Text] In December of 1930 French colonialism in North Africa was at its peak. In Algeria there were celebrations in honor of the centennial of the capture of Algiers by General de Bourmont. In Morocco the Berber "dahir" [decree] was being promulgated, a sort of "apartheid" which institutionalized the separatism between Arabs and Berbers to the benefit of the latter, making privileged the European element. In Tunisia a great demonstration was being organized: The Eucharistic Congress, aimed at "perpetuating Christ's sacrifice." In truth, it was a question of a "Ninth Crusade" against Islam, for, as had been pompously declared by the archbishop of Cartage at the meeting of this symposium, "the great plan of Saint Louis, inherited by Cardinal Lavigerie today motivates the Christians to hold this congress which will be a new crusade inspired by Christian charity and enlightened faith," or else, as an editorial in TUNISIE FRANCAISE stated, "Christ will walk the streets and squares of Cartage whose soil is imbued with the blood of our martyrs. One will see those backward peoples, Jews, Moslems, Greeks, Ethiopians, and Latins, come and throw themselves at his feet."

This was a skillfully carried project, one of the major targets of French colonialism being the pure and simple disintegration of the Arab-Moslem North African personality.

As early as 1925 the Office of the Resident General had already erected in the heart of Tunis the statue of Cardinal Lavigerie, a fierce supporter of the evangelizing of colonized peoples, making this provocative gesture of raising a cross on Tunisian soil.

Recalling these events, Bourguiba once said that "without our long struggle Tunisia itself would have been scratched off the map of the world and been annexed to French territory. Islam would have had the same fate. Christianity would have flooded us and our country would have

gone back to the religion which had been practiced under the Byzantine empire of which Tunisia was an integral part. People of my generation remember the Eucharistic Congress and have certainly preserved the image of the Christian youth marching in Tunis carrying flags on which the words "the Ninth Crusade" were inscribed. As a matter of fact, the Eighth Crusade had taken place on Tunisian territory in 1270 under the reign of al-Mustansir al-Hafsi. Saint Louis, the French king who commanded the crusade, was to die of cholera under the walls of Cartage. To eliminate this failure, the Eucharistic Congress in Tunisia was to mark the "Ninth Crusade." These truths are ignored by the young. However, they should know them to be able to imagine the fatal destiny which awaited this nation. . . ."

It was a fatal destiny. In the 1930's, all of North Africa had been thus profoundly mortified. Through its implacable military-administrative despotism, the ruling system was eliminating any type of opposition to colonialism. Powerless and in despair, the Moslem populations accepted all undertakings aimed at the destruction of their identity and dignity. Their guides of that time, most of them clergymen, involved as they were in nebulous visions of the future, suggested as actions of mobilization against the oppressor, to those who listened to them, evasion tactics alone: violent rejection of any element of foreign culture, resurrection of the past and the temptation to return to it in all matters, updating myths and their stimulation by the mind, the building of Utopias, and the desire to believe that they were the reality, and categorical objection to change, both historical and social. All this was promoted through professions of faith, speech-making, morosely relishing pains and wounds.

In Tunisia, the "old Destourians" have so brilliantly served these fantasies that Peyrouton, resident general at that time, quite profitably used the situation to provide a democratic alibi to a protectorate concerned with preserving institutional appearances: There was a "legitimate" bay, ministers freely chosen by him, an "opposition" party--the Destour--whereas, in reality, the factual power was exercised elsewhere within the General Residency, the Secretariat General of the Government, and the Civil Control. Actually, how could they know that this was a trap, having given up thinking, adopting fatality, blinded by the fixed reflection of the times?

Bourguiba knew this. He considered the period precisely not like a heterogeneous collection of memories but an anticipation of the future, leading the national cause out of the confusion it had fallen into.

As a matter of fact, his first political action during those years of total crumbling, was to dig deeply into the minds of the colonized Tunisians to show them that such was hiding a treasure. He encouraged them to examine their conscience, separate light from darkness, and see more clearly around them. He explained to them that it was not worthy of intelligent people to settle within obscurantism and chimeras. This was

a bright strategy whose first target was to stop the fall of the Tunisian people and the massacre of their Arab-Islamic identity, a massacre of which his short-sightedness had made him an unconscious accomplice, a fact of humiliating irony.

Therefore, a first positive feature of the liberation struggle had been established with Bourguiba's entry on the political scene: protecting the Tunisian personality and the Islamic religion from wasting away. The Eucharistic Congress gave the salvation signal. However, other events occurred as well which Bourguiba used intelligently.

First was the position he adopted in the course of a conference-discussion sponsored by the L'ESSOR on the problem of the veil. "The veil," he was to say, "is part of the Tunisian personality. In our time, under the system imposed on us, the powers would like to eliminate our personality and Frenchsize the Tunisian people. We are not strong. We have no power. We must cling to all the attributes, even though decadent, of this personality. This is the only way to preserve our own entity. We shall discuss the question of the veil the day when its disappearance will no longer threaten the integrity of our national identity, as was the case with the adoption of European clothing. Today, however, when our country is threatened by fusion, deletion, and destruction, to agree to the dropping of a feature of our personality would be suicidal. The day when the Tunisian woman, walking out without a veil, will not feel this strange impression which resembles a shout of rebellion of her subconscious atavism, that day the veil will disappear by itself harmlessly, for that which is symbolized will have disappeared. . . ."

There was also the battle as a result of which the young lawyer became a new kind of leader: the battle of naturalization. Bourguiba plunged into this battle entirely. Actually, it was not a question, in his case, of allowing the burial of a naturalized French citizen in a Moslem cemetery. This was a flagrant violation of the precepts of Islam as well as a new trick, carefully developed by the rulers, aimed at giving Cardinal Lavigerie's policy a maximum chance for success--Frenchisation being, actually, only a prelude to a pure and simple evangelizing. Starting with 1923 nearly 20,000 Moslems became naturalized French. Paradoxical though it might seem, the Tunisian legal experts of the times, pressured by Resident General Manceron, saw no obstacle to officially recognizing the Islamic state of those naturalized. Religion was once again in danger. Therefore, it had to be saved at all costs.

Bourguiba did not equivocate. He fought on two fronts. First, he fought the specific policy of naturalization through the mobilization of the people; secondly, he fought to prove that the opinion of the muftis on this matter was fraudulent. He succeeded. Sheik Idriss, the mufti of Bizerte, a sincere patriot, issued a "fatwa" [formal legal opinion] in answer to the request submitted by Habib Bougatfa, a man from Bizerte who

supported Bourguiba's ideas, forbidding the burial of naturalized French in Moslem cemeteries. This was a proper opportunity which the young lawyer was able to exploit to put an end to this comedy.

The fight for the right to a personality went on. A fight for a personality defined in terms of its profound roots but also with liberation in the future, raising the fight to a transcendent level previously unreached. The appearing identity of the Tunisian rejecting the colonial yoke also called for the obligation to reject the outrageous alternative of reactionary and iconoclastic loyalty to a dead past and a stubborn attachment to depersonalizing progress.

Anyone who wishes to draw on himself exclusively uses and dooms himself. Henceforth, irreversibly, the battle of man must draw its strength from a positive flow, the more so since Islamic religion, assuming that we acknowledge it as such, demands it.

Islam orders us to go into life with our eyes wide open and hands ready to grab. The eyes must not be inside of the head. Islam orders a rejection of litanies and, above all, the seeking of refuge in certitudes in the face of misfortune.

The works of its philosophers, in particular, should not remain dormant within their covers or be filed with books no longer read.

"If there is anything within Islam to astound the observer," Bourguiba has said, "it is its vitality and possibility to adapt to the difficulties of real life. The Moslem who counters the economic and social structures of the 20th century with a fearful action locks himself within a narrowed Islam which he reduces to his own dimensions and which enables him, at least so he believes, to protect himself from alienation and vegetate at the very brink of the precipice. Conversely, the Moslem who welcomes science and progress and who uses their benefits contributes to the rejuvenation of Islamic traditions, returning to Islam its universal nature. . . ."

A living Islam, therefore, is not at ease with amulets and charms. It "excommunicates" fictitious and phoney moralities.

Islam is a religion of progress.

Bourguiba's faith, opening the real values of Islamic religion, thus proclaims the primacy of man and makes it possible to choose emancipation rather than alienation, and freedom rather than fatalism.

It is a faith which does not agree with extrapolations which formulate *a priori* the features of a model society which would give birth to a new

golden age tailored to disembodied credulous people. It was this faith that gave the Tunisians an itenerary in which the desirable blends with the possible day after day in beautiful harmony. It was also able to create a new man of action and hope, as comfortable in the spirit as in the temporal, changing through the continuing study of ways and means which would best combine our Tunisian character with polyvalency.

Therefore, the fact that there are people who are knocking themselves out to "declare war" to the Bourguibian system is not astounding in the least. Undertakings which have been identified by the strength of their intelligence, lucidity, and national values have always been attacked.

At first, Bourguiba was fiercely opposed by the "old Destourians." Why? "Because he had dared to outline the main features of what the country was expecting of a great nationalist party at a time when the people, having gained their self-awareness, demanded radical solutions through tireless and energetic actions, conducted in the open, without unnecessary equivocation or ill-fated exclusivity, encompassing all those who were willing to recognize the danger threatening us and the inanity of all illusions."

Then came the turn of all so-called "future-makers" all of whom-- communists, Youssefists, perspectivists, Ba'thists, anarco-syndicalists and, the latest, fundamentalists--tried, in vain, to implant in Tunisia the dark rule of confusion of values and systems.

What was their common plan?

It was to destroy the young Tunisian nation, to cut it off its real values and take it over, ideologically and politically.

For the sake of what?

Of Marx' and Engels' class struggle?

Of Hegel's "struggle of consciences?"

Of Nietzsche's "generalized nihilism?"

Of Hasan al-Banna's "primitive and fossilized Islam?"

Of Michel 'Aflaq's "revolutionism?"

Of the "Tabula-Rasa" policy of the Red Brigades?

Of the Baader gangs? "I break therefore I am?"

Yes, along with all kinds of battles of words and catechisms absorbed in heavy doses.

Their tactic?

With some nuances, it is to block the development of the country, support a philosophy of misery and help, whenever possible, the ignorant, the simple-minded, the bitter, the jesters, and the lovers of trouble, in order to reindoctrinate them and involve them in troubles and violence.

The original truth is that all these sects are not interested in the least in seeing the Tunisians improve their condition in a state of freedom and authenticity. They would like to keep them in a state of slavery, poverty, hunger, and delinquency, to suborn them and to crush them between their brutal hands.

However, today the masks have fallen off once and for all.

The Tunisians no longer wish to be the victims of optical illusions. Within them the pressure of lucidity and intelligence rejects fakery and destructive enterprises.

Let the fundamentalists in particular, whose motives are becoming ever clearer, know that in our Tunisia, freed once and for all from obscurantism, catch souls in their nets and subsequently sell them to the highest bidder or preacher, that lying is a very "big sin" which could hardly be reconciled with the vocation of "morality maker," and that the golden thread which runs through their speeches is, in truth, a rather common piece of string, and that the time when religion was the "opium of the people" is gone.

Ever since the battle for naturalization, through proper interpretation and a spirit of reform, Islam has developed in Tunisia and has learned how to protect itself from bigots.

Needless to say that the overwhelming majority of Tunisians laugh at the "holy masquerades" and "sanctimonious jokes."

As a matter of fact, does one really consider asking them to send the women--all women--to the kitchen, to reinstitute polygamy, to boycott television, to ban songs, plays, and motion pictures, to reject foreign languages, to dress the same way, and to organize in phalanges haloed by mysteries and ready for anything, and so on. . . .

In any case, there is no longer today any place in our country for professional brain-pickers and manipulators, since in order to proliferate germs need a weak and defenseless body.

Let our "preaching brothers" be aware of this, since otherwise they may go right on happily tugging at their mythological beards, nothing will come out of their imprecations.

ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISTS CRITICIZED

Tunis DIALOGUE in French 17 Dec 79 pp 32-33

[Article by Raja el-Almi: "An Invitation to Tears"]

[Text] The following could have been a joke if its very authenticity did not make us think and make it an irrefutable testimony. It is a question of fundamentalism and, particularly, of a fundamentalist and the speech he gave one Sunday--does he remember it?--to a doctor whose word or integrity we trust implicitly. Following are a few significant parts of this "speech."

G.: . . . For the role they play in society the physicians will go to heaven. . .

Dr X: Unquestionably. I cannot imagine that Dr X (etc. . . he gives the names of deceased personalities who have rendered great service to mankind as doctors) to be in hell. . .

G.: I do not agree with you. Dr X will not go to heaven.

Dr X: Why?

G.: Because he did not pray. . . .

Dr X: Really?

(This conversation--if such a one-sided and unilateral speech could be described as such, punctuated by remarks or the questions of the physician--goes on. . . .)

G.: Do you know G. . . ?

Dr X: I have not had the honor. . . (In an effort to remember, he adds) No, I do not know who he is. . . .

G.: Are you serious? You really do not know G.? The one who "makes people cry in the mosques?"

Dr X: I do not know him. . . .

G.: You do not know G. whose cassettes are selling out like crazy?

Dr X: I do not know him. . . . And I will even tell you that precisely because I am a believer, I believe deeply, and that the Koran is the only book by my bedside, that I do not even want to know him, quite the contrary.

(At this point G. coldly begins to pour out a flood of words in which, clearly, politics takes over from theology, actually untraceable in his words, and criticizes in a virulent and violent manner the Tunisian state, letting it be understood that he and the likes of him could resort to violence. . . .)

Dr X: Listen, why do you want to mix politics with Islam? If you want to be in politics, be. Why do you want to use religion for such purposes? You appear to be somewhat more of a fanatic than is healthy. . .

G.: Do you know who I am? I am G.

Dr X: Ah! So you are G.? Why, then, pussyfoot? You should have been honest enough to introduce yourself openly. Allow me to ask you a question. Do you have a daughter?

G.: Yes.

Dr X: Would you stand for it that someday your daughter, married, finds herself in the company of three co-wives? Would you accept that?

G.: Yes.

Dr X: Then I really do not understand you. I gave you as an example your own daughter who should be more precious to you than anyone else in the world and you are giving me this kind of an answer. . . Therefore, no reasonable dialogue is possible between us. . . .

This marks the end of the excerpts of a testimony we wanted to offer our readers.

Therefore, Islam is not in the least the basis of the problem as formulated by the fundamentalists. First of all, this is because, in the heart of the debate, politics takes over from Islam and from simple clarity.

Otherwise, how could one be proud, like G. of "making people in the mosques cry?" Cry in such places of prayer where one calls upon God within the peace of one's soul and conscience, and in meditation? No, the mosques are not places for wailing but for peace, where the eternal

message which God gave his prophet should be the only one to be glorified. No, Islam is not an invitation to tears, rancors and revenge.

The reason for which religion was given to us in this world is to intensify the knowledge which enhances the soul, which cleanses it, and which open to us the paths of knowledge, tolerance, fraternity, and understanding of others.

The reason for which Islam is the only religion in which all mediation between believers and God is rejected and nonexistent, is precisely for protecting the believers from error and sheltering them from all maneuvers which could harm the essential aspect of faith and not turn it away from its objective which is not, which cannot be, political.

Therefore, let no one invite us to tears and let no one give us, in the mosques, which are places for prayer or anywhere else, confused thoughts with a view to even more sinister plans! Let no one disturb the peace of the believers and try to disturb their deepest and noblest convictions! For, in the case of the overwhelming majority of believers in Tunisia, the quality of their faith and of their lives puts them out of reach. This is confirmed by the fact that only a few adolescents (of both sexes) have let themselves be trapped because they are living in a complex period of permanent concern during which the quest for oneself never ends. It is far simpler to fanaticise and plunge into error a still insufficiently molded mind than it is to convince an adult. An adult who knows what Islam, the only, the true, has brought mankind and who, listening to a sermon, renders quite simply to Marx what is Marx' and to any other ideologist what is his. Therefore, an adult would know that, in the final account, Islam had been used as a pretext and that the Koran has been used as sugar coating.

In this sense discernment is the most positive attitude: The "fundamentalist speech"--assuming that such odds and ends of interdictions and invectives could be raised to this status--cannot face it. We also know the extent to which the Tunisians have learned how to be discerning, as we know how much they value precisely the contribution which Bourguiba made to Islam in Tunisia and his contribution to the party and the state both of which he founded.

His contribution is unquestionable, for without it, as was the wish of France, Islam would have had the saddest of fates and experienced a total degradation.

On the other hand, there is no plurality within Islam. Islam is one, in Tunisia and in the Sunni Islamic world. It is one and indivisible. The proof is that schismatic and separatist reactionary movements, wherever they may have appeared, have been adopted exclusively by small minorities.

These are outgrowths which are considered in terms of their strangeness but which could neither develop nor threaten a homogeneous, united, firm, and healthy social body.

This means that such individuals can preach only in the desert and that their message, if message there is, of tears and violence, would affect only those who are not secure in their faith. In Tunisia, they are very few.

The more so since, to follow them, one should surrender one's lucidity, possibility for free thinking, and free control of oneself.

In today's Tunisia is this possible?

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CSO: 4400

TUNISIA

ARRESTS, RELEASE OF ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISTS REPORTED

Tunis AL-RA'Y in Arabic 11 Jan 80 p 2

[Text] After a stay in France, Professor Hassen Ghodbani returned to the homeland on 5 January. On the morning of 7 January, he was summoned by National Security officials to the Security Administration where he was questioned. He was released on 8 January.

Saturday before last [29 December], Professor Rached Ghanouchi was released. We have learned that the Ministry of National Education has appointed him as a professor of philosophy at the Maktar secondary institute.

Naceur Hakimi who had been "absent" for about a half-month was also "released."

We recently learned that about 25 students affiliated with the Islamic trend have been arrested.

CSO: 4402

SAFIA CHRAIET QUESTIONS AIMS OF EXTREMISTS

Tunis DIALOGUE in French 17 Dec 79 pp 32-33

[Article by Safia Chraiet: "'New Illuminati,' Who Are You?"]

[Text] They are off! Perhaps like the "new philosophers" (this being the fashion!) the "new illuminati" would like to sprinkle us with holy water. The customs of an age gone by come to life. Sanctimonious sermons and speculations are used for purposes of rambling, snarling, castigating, and freely indulging in fantasies. Briefly stated, we see the four directions of the total paranoiac personality. A couple of verses here, a hadith there, the purity peddlers are trumpeting the need for reform. Naturally, the woman is in the core of their cogitations. The program is delectable. We are passed through a sieve. No holds barred! Sports? Forbidden because of unhealthy promiscuousness. No more television, no more movies. They would corrupt us. Women? Bury yourselves, dear ones, with a white Tunisian-style chador. Go to the kitchen, where you/are an intellectual or engaged in manual labor. Apparently, our manes emit waves which the killers of Islam would be unable to resist. The snake is going along its delirious way. No more theater, no more songs, all this is loaded with pollution! Should we junk all our assets? Yet, what do our "illuminati" offer us in exchange?

They ask us to lock ourselves in a well padded room with a promise of heaven. . .perhaps, but certainly a coffin! Eat dry bread instead of a bun? No. Trade the CSP [Code of Personal Status] for the broom? One thousand times no. No, we are not sheep.

Nothing is forgotten in this garbage can revolution and the godfathers of obscurantism are glancing with slanted eyes at the banks. Henceforth no deposits, no interest paid or charged on deposits or loans. Definitely, everything will work at the rhythm of a power saw. Ah! Whenever some brains become sick the machine can only work in fits. The Western models stink of rot? So be it. Yet, are we about to create a model based on the cult of goatees and the metaphysical anguishes of neurotics? By thunder, their value tax is shooting upwards! It is as though Lucifer

has put on the burnouse. True, the closer they believe to be to God the more they skid. Where is the tolerance which is the very essence of Islam? Where is the serenity of the worshipers of God? Alas, our road is not paved with good intentions. Your hatred is too strong. Your fanatical rage to disembowel your neighbor is blinding. You care far more for your turban than for human beings. Left alone, you would make for us a sinister horizon in the Apocalypse Now style. You would be butchers, wholesale and detail. . . . What! Our fate is already sealed!

Here is another "recipe" of the promoters of this stew. Lecturing must pay. Marx, Lenin, and Mao. . . . were unable to bribe the conscience of the Tunisian despite their rationalizations. Therefore, putting God at the head seems more dialectical and the people are encouraged to follow this way. No public trials but just the right amount of touting to try to discredit. As to the leaders . . . let them go out so that we can come in. Actually, what is current society being blamed for? Its openness, its flexibility, its spirit of tolerance? I am ready to sign a hereditary lease contract with the spirit of today. As to you, you should play behind bars. Let the ward for the violently insane be placed at your disposal! That may be good therapy!

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CSO: 4400

REPORT ON STATEMENT ON RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

Tunis DIALOGUE in French 17 Dec 79 p 36

[Statement by PSD [Destourian Socialist Party] Director Mohamed Sayah at the conference of secretaries general of coordination committees: "No to Extremism"]

[Text] "This meeting is the point of departure of a new action which will be pursued until the next legislative elections and which will follow an overall strategy for the animation of Destourian life and defining the principal party guidelines." That is how Mohamed Sayah, party director and minister delegate attached to the prime minister, described the meeting he chaired last Monday at Party House, attended by the secretaries general of coordination committees.

The meeting also provided the opportunity "to get rid of the anarchic and destructive tendency which has recently appeared in all areas and circles, a tendency which, under the cover of religion, is harming the latter and is hostile to the reformist tendency which appeared at the turn of the century," and whose torchbearers are people of Bourguiba's stature. Mohamed Sayah explained to those present that the events at the al-Masjid al-Haram mosque in Mecca proved the hatred which the extremists feel for Islam and exposed the real aims of those people who wanted to use religion for political purposes and their sordid designs.

Recalling the true values on which Islam faith is founded, the party director emphasized that this destructive tendency has found no reverberation in Tunisia, with the exception of a few embittered individuals, known for their reaction and hostility to the current regime which has scored important achievements in overall development.

Mohamed Sayah also reminded the secretaries general of coordination committees of the appeal of President Bourguiba to every citizen to double his or her vigilance in order "to defend the fatherland, preserve the gains of the nation, and safeguard religion from all trends which could do harm to the Moslems and their progress."

On the other hand, the party director emphasized the need to strengthen orientation and political training work and focus the activities of the various party units on problems of development and concern of the citizens, and to intensify the dialogue with the latter within the framework of the regional commissions, in the first stage, and, subsequently, in the framework of conferences of regional cadres. . . . for the only battle which requires sacrifices and the coordination of efforts is the battle for development.

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CSO: 4400

WESTERN SAHARA

POLISARIO SECRETARY PESSIMISTIC CONCERNING HASSAN'S INTENTIONS

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 25 Nov 79 p 5

[Interview with Polisario Front General Secretary Mohamed Abdelaziz by APS]

[Text] SDAR (APS)--In an interview granted to APS, Polisario Front General Secretary Mohamed Abdelaziz expressed his pessimism, in the light of the Moroccan monarchy's previous actions, concerning the "peaceful intentions" of King Hassan II at the time of the upcoming summit conference of the OAU ad hoc committee, which will meet on 6 and 7 December in Monrovia.

QUESTION: Will the SDAR [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] be represented at the ad hoc committee summit conference scheduled to be held in Monrovia?

ANSWER: Yes, the SDAR will be represented at that meeting. We have received an official invitation from the acting OAU chairman to participate in the ad hoc committee's proceedings.

QUESTION: What will be the agenda of that committee's proceedings?

ANSWER: It is known that the agenda is the text itself of the resolution of the 16th OAU summit held in Monrovia. The committee selected by African chiefs of state can deal only with the application of the 16th summit's resolution, which clearly states that, for the restoration of peace in the region, the legality and reestablishment of the Saharan people's rights must also be restored. Any other agenda will be rejected by the SDAR's representatives, because we want to remain strictly within the limits set by the Organization of African Unity.

Commenting on the possible presence of Hassan II in Monrovia, Mr Mohamed Abdelaziz stated: "There is a strong chance that he will be there, not so much out of respect for the African Organization and our continent's chiefs of state, for the whole world knows the contempt in which King Hassan II holds both our African organization and its representatives (conferences, ballyhoo, etc.). Hassan II will go to Monrovia under the pressure of the United States of America. In return for the military and financial aid

which it is granting to Morocco, the United States is determined at any price to reestablish the bridge between Hassan II and the OAU. The United States does not openly wish to side with a government totally isolated from the African continent, the OAU, nonaligned countries and international organizations devoted to world justice and legality. Thus as it happens, this ad hoc committee meeting will be the touchstone for precisely determining Washington's intentions. If the United States really wants to help restore peace, it will support the resolutions made by the United Nations, the OAU and by nonaligned countries.

As to the Rabat government's attitude, "knowing the Moroccan king's methods, we tend to believe that there will be a new exploitive move by the king of Morocco to sidetrack application of the 16th OAU summit's resolution, to gain time to receive any expected American military aid, to make people believe in a Moroccan development toward peace, to obtain to some degree the forgiveness of the OAU, which he publicly insulted, and to make new preparations for war in total contradiction to international opinion. This approach is in keeping with the position dictated to him by Washington and with the memorandum recently distributed to African embassies with the intention of presenting Morocco as no longer being that nation in political and economic decline, which it is in reality."

QUESTION: Thus it is the United States which is directly and overtly directing the Moroccan game?

ANSWER: To a large extent, yes. But Hassan II is also adding his own personal touch to this method. These are verifiable facts for understanding that Moroccan participation in the ad hoc committee's proceedings is only a ploy: in 1975, as soon as the OAU came out in favor of their charter, the Saharan people's right to self-determination and the legality of their cause, King Hassan appealed to the International Court of the Hague, which also condemned him. Immediately after the OAU summit in Port Louis (Mauritius) in July 1976, the Moroccan king demanded a special summit to extend the deadline. After the Khartoum summit, Hassan II turned to the United Nations and tried to take this matter away from the OAU. After the 16th Monrovia summit and the ad hoc committee's preliminary proceedings, the king resorted to so-called economic peace proposals. As we have seen, every time that the deadline approaches and another door closes before his intransigence, Hassan II sidetracks international opinion and attention with another plea. His presence at the OAU peace committee's meeting must be considered part of these political tactics.

"Actually, the king is moving toward his ultimate condemnation if he deceives the African Organization."

QUESTION: What are the effects of these tactics and their limits within the OAU committee?

ANSWER: They perpetuate destabilization of the region, hamper its economic development and threaten the security of the African continent. For the African Organization's committee, the matter is clear and definite. None of

the neighboring countries claims any sovereignty over Western Sahara or any part of it. Mauritania, with which we have concluded a peace treaty, is favorable and wants to hasten the return to legality. Our country's borders are familiar to the entire world and the only invader today is Morocco, whose armed forces occupy several positions in our territory. Finally, the decision to reestablish the rights of our people is clear and definite. Could we wish for anything clearer?

QUESTION: Thus the issues concerning the reestablishment of peace in Western Sahara are still the same for the SDAR?

ANSWER: Absolutely. If the expansionist Moroccan forces withdraw from our territory, if our people in exile and in Moroccan jails can return to their homes, then peace will be on everyone's lips and in every heart.

For no one must believe that we are making war for the sole pleasure of proving the force and determination of our people. We want international peace, security, brotherhood and mutual aid. We do not hate anyone. Neither the American people, who are witnesses to their government's injustice toward us, nor the French people, whose "Mirages" maim our children, nor even the Moroccan people, whose poverty, fears and submission to the police forces established by the king we deplore.

QUESTION: King Hassan II has ordered his armed forces to occupy Rio de Oro (La Guerre, Tichla, Aousserd, etc.). What does this new action mean when the FAR [Royal Armed Forces] are incapable of protecting their own territory?

ANSWER: This decision is undeniable proof of the Moroccan monarch's adventurism. The expedition into Rio de Oro (Oued Eddehab) has a dual purpose: the first is to exert direct pressure on Mauritania to deprive it of peace by establishing on its borders armed units capable of threatening and attacking vital locations in northern Mauritania. The second purpose satisfies the absolute need for the king to allay the misgivings of countries supporting him and those of the Moroccan people.

QUESTION: Does the king have any chance of succeeding in this attempt?

ANSWER: He has none, for it is in southern Morocco itself that we are preparing to strike deepest into the country. The most recent victories of our combat units have gone unreported and the FAR does not have more than three defensive positions left, which will soon fall.

QUESTION: Did Morocco report through a certain press agency that it tried to make contact with the Polisario Front?

ANSWER: The only contact was that of Bamako. There have never been any others. If there are to be any political contacts, it will only be within the framework of the African Organization and within the strict limits of the decision made by the OAU. In the meantime, we offer to make several military contacts with him every day. But he doesn't appreciate them at all.

WESTERN SAHARA

ALGERIAN SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS REPORTED

Casablanca LIBERATION in French 11-17 Jan 80 pp 7, 13

[Article by Mohamed El Berini: "Should We Seek 'National Salvation' in Algeria?"]

[Excerpts] In January 1979 there was a new "palace revolution." Chief of State Ould Louly was thrown out. The "reshuffling" involved the CMSN [Military Committee for National Salvation] and the government. Ould Haidallah took all power. The official Mauritanian radio estimated that those who were kicked out constituted a "brake" on the country's recovery. The new rulers--it was said--will have to launch "the policy of austerity in economic matters and the consolidation of peace." Once again internal differences exploded in public. Neither the "pullout" of Mauritania from the Maghreb conflict, nor the signing of the Algiers agreement with the so-called Polisario [Front], nor the various reshufflings at the head of the political and military hierarchy made it possible to harmonize the viewpoints of the leaders. Nor did they make it possible to restore an increasingly critical domestic situation. Political and military instability in some way was the dominant feature at Nouakchott after the overthrow of the regime of Ould Daddah. But another constant factor did remain. "The palace revolutions" in Mauritania took place in a calm way and without any bloodshed contrary to what was happening in certain countries of the Third World.

Moreover, the various changes which took place at Nouakchott did have an effect on Mauritanian policy toward the conflict between Morocco and Algeria. Consequently, this new "palace revolution" raised some questions: is it only the final outcome of a power struggle between the various groupings in the CMSN? Does it have other dimensions? Which are they? This is the regional situation in which this change--which makes these questions so pressing--took place.

Let us look at some of the aspects involved: the withdrawal of Moroccan troops from Mauritania has been completed. Basically, there is nothing more that should make for any continued tension between Rabat and Nouakchott (except for the occupation of Gouira by Mauritania, reports on the

Mauritanian retreat have not been confirmed). Morocco seems to be adopting a firm military position in the field. Certain acts of aggression against the Moroccan Sahara are continuing (Haggounia, Zag, etc.) but they are no longer of the same size as the earlier ones against Bir Anzarane, Tan Tan, Lebourirate, Smara, and Bou Graa, where thousands of mercenaries were engaged in battle. Nobody now believes in the "solution" recommended by the "wise men."

But the most important thing is what goes on behind the scenes. Certain reports from well-informed sources point to new Algerian proposals. Algiers supposedly asked France to mediate between it and Rabat. The former has reportedly already begun to test the water. The Algerian plan contains two parts or two propositions.

Here is the first one. Morocco would withdraw from Wadi Addahab, while the Polisario [Front] would settle down and, with Mauritania, constitute a confederation. Sakia Al Hamra would remain under Moroccan sovereignty.

Here is the second proposal. Give very broad autonomy to what people continue to call the "Western Sahara." Allow the Polisario [Front] to penetrate there. Sovereignty would remain with Morocco.

This is a summary of the Algerian plan whose risks, as far as Morocco is concerned, are obvious. Moreover, it should be noted that the Algerian minister of foreign affairs will soon make an official visit to France. "The Saharan issue will be at the focus of discussion. There is therefore every indication that there is feverish activity behind the scenes. And Paris is the center.

Is all of this related to the change that has taken place in Mauritania which remains a protegee of France? It is too soon to answer that question.

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